

BBC

April 2015
DHS15 | QR15

goodfood

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Middle East

Hey, sugar!

Caramel desserts
everyone will love

Bite-sized toffee apple
doughnuts, p62

It's *springtime*

Make the most of alfresco
weather with our
Mediterranean menu

Thai-licious!

Exotic ideas for Songkran

The new
superfoods
you should be
eating now

Plus:



Discover
Hoi-An



Your guide
to pasta

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Welcome!



Probably not the best way to jump into my editor's note this month, but for a while now, I've been feeling a little run down and low on energy – hands up, who is nodding their heads in agreement? If the first few months of 2015 are anything to go by, I think this is going to be a busy-busy-busy year. But, as I always say, rather busy than not! However, the key to successfully managing a busy life with lots of different balls in the air, is to stay on top of your health. Not only does it make us more physically capable, but it also affects us psychologically and emotionally.

Which is why, on a recent holiday, instead of visiting trendy bars and restaurants (although I did do a bit of that too!), I visited a naturopath and came back armed with supplements, nutrition advice, and most importantly, renewed energy. What better time than spring, a season of new beginnings, to infuse fresh enthusiasm into life? With that in mind, check out our feature on eating well all week (*Midweek made healthier*, p25), packed with simple, speedy recipes that the whole family will love. Assistant editor Nicola has also rounded up the hot new health foods that those in the know are talking about (bee pollen, anyone?) in *Trendy toppings*, p68. Sometimes it's as simple as sprinkling a nutritional powerhouse such as maqui powder on your breakfast cereal to make the difference between sluggish and super-charged.

I do believe that good health is always about balance though, so as much as it is important to eat well, it is equally important to ensure there is laughter and pleasure in your life. We inspire you to enjoy the spring sunshine with *Lunch in the sun*, p47, show you how easy it is to host a dinner for friends (*Sharing-style party menu*, p50), and encourage you to not shy away from some decidedly decadent sweet treats in *Sticky fingers*, p57.

Stay well and stay positive!

Sudeshna

Editor's picks



◆ Nothing like a cup of tea to warm the soul! p11



◆ I adore the vintage-chic look of this mug, p77

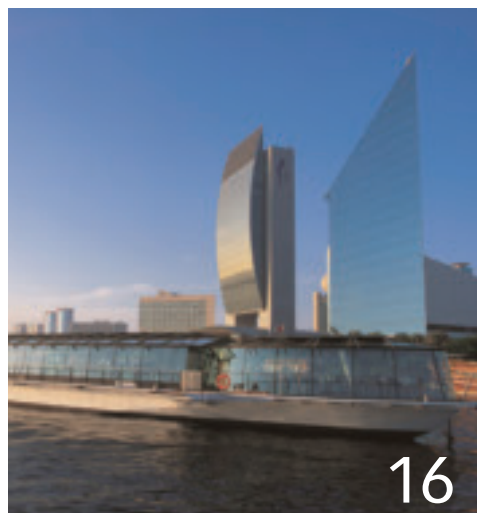


◆ I swear by chia seeds, and toss some into my breakfast everyday! P68

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Indulgent dessert ideas with caramel.



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*GOURMET LIFESTYLE

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Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians

❄ You can freeze it

❄ Not suitable for freezing

Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make

A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry

More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks

Low fat 12g or less per portion

Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.

Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.

Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving

Vit C **Iron** **Omega-3** **Calcium** **Folate** **Fibre**

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients

GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol.

These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:

P Contains pork

A Contains alcohol

Store Directory

Contact numbers for outlets featured in this issue

Bloomingdale's Homes: 04-3505464

Cocosia: 04-3950977

Eataly: 04-3308899

Ethan Allen: 04-3308871

Forrey and Galland: 04-3398850

Homes R Us: 04-4469820

Lakeland: 04-3236081

Nespresso: 04-3928181

Sauce Gifts: 04-3883488

Tavola: 04-3402933

The One: 04-3955889

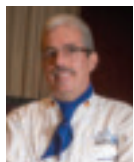
TWG Tea Salon and Boutique: 04-3253857

Villeroy and Boch: 04-3399676

Note: Prices in Qatari Riyals are approximately the same as UAE Dirhams.

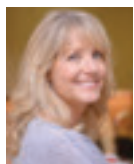
Meet our Editorial Panel

The exclusive group of experts who are part of the **BBC Good Food ME** family:



Uwe Micheel A veteran chef, Uwe has been cooking since he was 12, and in the interim 30 odd years, he has picked up numerous awards, and has been serving as

President of the Emirates Culinary Guild since 1999. A member of several international chef's groups, he is one of the UAE's most respected culinary personalities.



Kate Fisher is a highly qualified and experienced nutritionist who has been working in the UK and the Middle East with various hospitals and clinics since the

1980s. A trained microbiologist, and graduate of Nutritional Medicine from University of Surrey, she has, among other things, set up a clinic in Harley Street, and worked with private clinics and food brands, as a nutrition consultant.



Danielle Nierenberg President of Food Tank, a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization-supported non-profit body focused on sustainable agriculture and

food systems, Danielle is a world-renowned expert on food issues, and a widely published and quoted personality. Qualified in Agriculture, Food, and Environment from Tufts University, New York-based Danielle aims to build a global network to promote safe, healthy eating.



Michael Kitts The Director of Culinary Arts at the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management has hung up his chef's whites, wearing which he

had spent over 20 years working at various leading establishments in London and won numerous accolades, to turn mentor and teacher to young aspirants of the hospitality industry in the UAE's leading training centre.



Marta Yanci Founder of bespoke catering company Marta's Kitchen, and more recently, a boutique cafe in JLT, Marta's workshop, Marta is a

self-taught chef who took her passion for good food and turned it into a career five years ago. Now a recognised face on the UAE culinary circuit, the former lawyer has appeared on TV in Dubai and her home country, Spain.



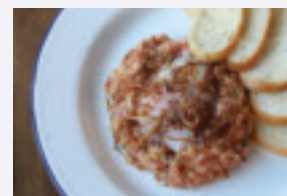
Andy Campbell A Scottish celebrity chef who now calls Dubai home, Andy has trained at Westminster College, and previously worked at various

restaurants, including Michelin-starred ones, and also ran his own restaurant in London, before moving here to work as a private chef for exclusive events. He currently also consults with Arabian Health Care in Ras al Khaimah.

Menu planner

Whip up a delicious meal with recipes from this issue

Dinner party to impress the in-laws



Starter

Steak tartare, duck egg yolk and croutons, p50



Main course

Cheat's chicken kiev, p29



Dessert

Crème brûlée tartlets, p60

Behind the scenes

Take a look at what the **BBC Good Food ME** team members got up to this month!

Marketing manager Marizel has been flat out at events all month!



Photographer Maksym decided he was a better subject than the food at a shoot!

Assistant editor Nicola tried out the new menu at The Act Dubai

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Your say

We love to hear from you!

CELEB CHEF LOVE!

I can't believe Jean-Georges is opening a restaurant in Dubai! I love his TV shows, and how humble he is. He seems like such a great man, and after reading about his journey, I think I am even more of a fan. I know I'll be at the restaurant the week it opens.



Siquera Doris



WINNING ISSUE

I was out of town, and couldn't make it to the BBC Good Food ME Awards, but would have loved to. When I got a copy of the magazine, I was pleased to

see that all the winners' pictures were there, and snapshots from the night too - it looked like a fun one! Can't wait to book my seat for next year's event.

Leanna Rodrigues

SOMETHING FOR MUM

My mother was in town for Mother's Day, and after reading the recipes on the lovely bakes (*Mother's pride*, March 2015) I decided I would bake the White chocolate & raspberry cake - it was my first time baking for her. I'm not sure if she liked the thought, or the taste of the cake more, but she was definitely very happy I made



it. Since then, I also tried the Blood orange muffins (*Citrus sunshine*, March 2015) and they turned out absolutely delicious. Thank you BBC Good Food ME for inspiring me, and getting me into the kitchen to bake.

Muhtas Salem

FISH FOCUS

I wonder if anyone else found the local fish recipes (*Fresh Catch*, March 2015) as

interesting as I did? I've always seen different fish varieties in the market, and while they looked good and fresh, I never knew how to cook with them! I tried the Sultan Ibrahim pot pie, and my family polished it off - it was that tasty! I tried to present it in the same way as the chef did as well, and it actually came out pretty good. Very proud of myself!

Khiara Thames



The winner of the Star Letter gets a year's supply (12) medium-sized **YANKEE**

CANDLES, worth **DHS1,200 FROM TAVOLA**.

The scented candle company is known for their interesting jar candles, with scents that transform your home into a scented haven. A selection of floral, fruity, musky, and nature-inspired scents are available, as well as interesting foodie fragrances like chocolate, salted caramel, and jelly beans too.



Star Letter

BACK ON TRACK

When I was younger, I used to be slim and a fashion-freak, which made me feel extremely good on the outside. Now that I am a working mother, and too lazy to cook, I realise that I order takeout a lot. This has caused my family and myself a lot of health issues and weight gain. I came across the March issue recently, when my colleague was reading it during lunch break, and quickly borrowed it. I found the recipes creative, and tried out a number of them which weren't too difficult to prepare. My family now enjoy every meal that I cook, and I find that we are becoming healthier again. We absolutely

enjoy home cooked meals now, and the magazine is a fun read too. I like the bits from Aisle file for tempting items, Marta Yanci's extremely helpful tips, and the recipes. My kids were also inspired, and prepared the Fruit Traybake (*Mother's pride*, March 2015). They said it was so healthy and packed with real fruits. The magazine serves the best for my family, and has helped us get our health back on track too.

Victoria D'Souza



From our social media pages

* Last night at @tasteofdubai, @BBCGoodFoodME Chef of the Year @refaiekee of #ZumaRestaurant in action! #chefoftheyear - *TSSC Dubai*

* Attempting to make the recipe in 'Baked with love' but I can't stop licking the spoon! Yum yum! - *Abbey Urbanski*

* @TheWalk @MovenpickJBR @BBCGoodFoodME Absolutely not surprised they won the Best Brunch award - loved the brunch here - *Rachael Fernandes*



TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts and comments, and send us your photos with your copy of BBC Good Food ME!

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on:



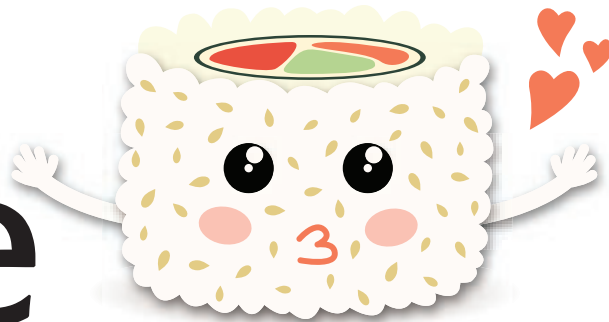
Or, you could write to us at:
The Editor, BBC Good Food Middle East.
Grosvenor Business Tower, Tecom, Office 804
PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.



GLAZE GLORY

Lurpak® Cooking Mist is your trusted companion for a crisp, golden finish when glazing and basting. The blend of Lurpak® butter and vegetable oil gives even coverage without the fuss. Try it also for greasing pans and tins, or on top of cooked vegetables, pasta and rice.

Foodie file



What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



DINE IN THE CITY

3 FAB NEW RESTAURANTS TO TRY - WITH ITALIAN CUISINE APPEARING TO BE HOT STUFF IN THE UAE RIGHT NOW!

* Italian food lovers can now head to the all-new Pullman Dubai Jumeirah Lakes Towers to try Manzoni. Named after the Italian poet and author, the restaurant offers a modern menu including coffee-flavoured lamb rack, pumpkin purée with balsamic roasted cipollini onions, as well as antipasti, pasta, risotto, fish and pizza straight out of wood-fired pizza ovens. Call 04-5671221.

* Dubai's newest hotspot worth visiting is Solo Bistronomia and Vinobar, at Raffles Dubai, which offers a rustic-style ambience for those looking for dishes from the oven, bakery, and gastro-counter. Relish a selection of cheeses, dishes like zucchini flower stuffed with lobster, and premium quality wine from the cellar. Call 04-3708999.

* The capital's newest Italian fine-dining restaurant, B...easy Italian Restaurant at Sofitel Abu Dhabi Corniche, offers the stunning corniche as the backdrop. Indulge in linguine with lobster or beef tagliata with rocket salad and Grana cheese, among other tasty dishes. Call 056-7801016.

A **green** solution

Don't have a green thumb? Don't worry, you can now use Green Mat, a sub-surface farming method to conserve irrigated water, created by Landex Environmental Solution. The mat is 100 per cent natural, and can be used indoors, or on rooftops – as it requires a lot of soil. You can also use it along with compost mixed with sand. The mat can be used for everything from flower beds to vegetable patches – the staff at Dubai Electricity and Water Authority in Al Quoz, have been using it to grow cauliflower, cabbage, and tomatoes, on their building rooftop. Priced at Dhs300 per square metre, it is available from greenmatuae.com. Going green was never easier!

MINIATURE CRAZE

The latest videos breaking the internet are of tiny meals. The concept, known as Kawaiicooking (kawaii translates to cute in Japanese), originated in Japan – where else?! – and features miniature versions of dishes like sushi, scrambled quail egg and sausage, and shrimp tempura, among others, that are just too-cute-to-eat. The videos show you how to make a number of edible dishes, using tiny collectible pots and pans. Watch Miniature Space channel on Youtube to see the creations being made.



This just in:

Electrolux has introduced a brand new range of appliances for home kitchens. Marking a first for the brand, the MasterPiece collection has been developed with inputs from leading chefs. The food processor features a powerful 2000W induction motor – to slice, chop, mix, shred, emulsify, and knead quicker than conventional processors. The collection also includes an immersion blender with a triple blade open foot design, and a sleek jug blender with built-in Powertilt technology. Prices start from Dhs799, at Jashanmal stores.

Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SUPPLIED, SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



The World Food Program has recently announced that it has hit rock bottom, since World War II, trying to manage humanitarian cases. Crises in Syria, Iraq, South Sudan, and the Ebola outbreak are just some of the cases the organisation has to manage, and at the moment, WFP require about \$113 million just for Syria, to continue providing food. Food vouchers came to a halt – for several weeks in December – for two million Syrian refugees, as there was no money to fund it. However, after appealing through social media, they were able to restart the vouchers in January. Do your good deed and make your donation, visit wfp.org.

“First we eat, then we do everything else.”

– American food writer Mary Frances Kennedy Fisher



The ultimate burgers

Craving a juicy burger? Shake Shack and Burger Fuel were recently voted the two premium burger joints in the UAE, according to an independent study by consultancy firm Retail Access.

#What's trending

#foodtrucksUAE

A hot topic on Twitter, initiated by BBC Good Food ME's blogger of the year, Sally Prosser, and Ghaf Kitchen, is the sudden explosion of street food and food trucks in the UAE's culinary scene. It's interesting to read people's opinions on the pricing – which most people find steep, for street bites – and suggestions, which vary, from more options of healthy food, to dishes made with local ingredients.

Join in the conversation on Twitter!



Home



And she's back!

Paula Deen, the renowned TV personality and celebrity chef, is making waves again with her new radio show and podcast. Paula was on a sabbatical for more than a year – after a massively negative backlash to her racist comments on TV – but is finally coming back into the limelight with her podcast What's Cooking with Paula Deen, which will comprise of one-minute long segments revealing cooking tips, on a daily basis. The podcast is set to air on May 1 on PaulaDeen.com, and iTunes.





Amwaj
Rotana

Jumeirah Beach – Dubai

Simply Salmon

1 – 30 April
Rosso and Benihana

This Spring, we will feature a delectable menu of fresh organic salmon farmed sustainably in wild pristine waters without the use of unnatural farming methods and synthetic materials.

Organic salmon doesn't contain colouring and tends to be pale in colour compared to regular salmon. It also contains more Omega-3, which is known to contribute to a variety of health benefits.

Our kitchen team will prepare a menu of a la carte dishes made with organic salmon and available daily for lunch and dinner throughout April.

**For reservations or more information, please contact us on
+971 (0)4 428 2000 or via email at fb.amwaj@rotana.com.**

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Aisle file

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, home décor and more.



Find icing cakes too much trouble? Use this fun and bright **CAKE BANNER** instead - a mess-free option! Dhs50 at **SAUCE GIFTS**.



How cool do these **TALKING BUBBLE SNACK SET** plates look? They will surely stir up a conversation at your next cocktail-do. Dhs99 for two, at **WAMLI.COM**.



A new season calls for a new tea routine. TWG has recently launched the **RED BALLOON HAUTE COUTURE TEA**, which features bright blueberries, nashi fruit, and rooibos to make a light, tangy and slightly fruity cup. Dhs140 at **TWG TEA SALON AND BOUTIQUE**.

We will be adding a glamorous touch to our coffee tables with this **PORCELAIN OVAL FRUIT BOWL**, from the new Mango collection. Dhs85 at **SILICA**.



This elegant **EAMON COPPER TEALIGHT HOLDER** will add a warm glow when you light up a candle in it. Dhs89 at **THE ONE**.

No there's no genie in this bottle, but we love the minimalist look. We will place a long vertical candle in it, to use for our next dinner party. Dhs460 at **AL HUZAIFA FURNITURE**.



Making ravioli can be a tricky task, especially if you haven't mastered the technique from a Nonna. But not if you're equipped with this **MASTRAD RAVIOLI KIT**, a ten-piece set which comprises of five moulds, four cutters, ten designs, and a stamp holder. Dhs190 at **LAKELAND**.

These pretty **RICE MELAMINE CAKE SERVERS** makes us want to bake a beautiful cake, just so we can use them! Dhs52 each at **PANTRY CAFÉ** and **THE CHANGE INITIATIVE**.



Brighten up your dining chairs with these eclectic **FILLED CUSHIONS** in various colours and prints. Dhs69 at **HOMES R US**.

Here to help

All your culinary and décor questions answered.



Expert chef Marta Yanci, founder of bespoke catering company Marta's Kitchen, addresses your cooking dilemmas.

Q How do I keep bagels moist after baking them?

A. As bread, homemade bagels won't stay moist for very long. The best way to make sure they do, is to keep them in a paper bag that is properly sealed. If you do notice that the bagels have dried up slightly, toast it, and add your favourite toppings.



Q What breadcrumbs should I use, to give baked chicken a nice crust?

A. To give chicken a nice, perfect baked crust, I always use the Japanese breadcrumbs, Panko. These are made from bread that is baked by passing an electric current through the dough, which makes the crumbs flakier, lighter, and ensures they absorb less oil. This gives it a better texture, although the flavour remains the same as regular breadcrumbs.



Marta's ingredient of the month

Morels – this wonderful mushroom provides a great nutty flavour to any dish. You can prepare a morel sauce to serve with your beef or chicken, or simply sauté it and have it as a side dish. I also like to use the dried variety. You can also hydrate the dried mushrooms and use that same water to prepare a risotto! If you want to keep this seasonal mushroom for longer, sauté it with butter and freeze it.

Q I bought a spiruliser and have only used it for zucchini so far. What else can I use it for?

A. A spiruliser is such a handy gadget to have. You can use it to make carrot, pumpkin, and radish spirals or noodles, to name just a few vegetables. Using it also makes your meals look nicer, and it's a perfect way of sneaking in some vegetables into your children's pasta dishes.

Q I baked cookies for the first time, and they turned out hard. How do I make them chewy?

A. One of my favourite tricks is to make cookie dough balls and place them directly in the oven, instead of flattening each cookie. This way, as they cook, they melt and turn into cookies – keeping their chewy centre intact.



Q I can never tell which tuna is sushi grade, and sometimes the store staff don't either. What's the difference, and is it important if I'm searing the tuna?

A. Sushi-grade tuna simply means that it has been frozen at minus 20C or below for at least seven days, ensuring that the growth of parasites is diminished as much as possible. That is the only true difference between sushi-grade tuna and regular tuna. This means that you can use sushi-grade tuna for searing, although it isn't really necessary and will be a lot more expensive to be honest. Any fresh, lean tuna steak is perfect for searing.



DESIGN Q&A

Interiors expert Pavitra Pujary, founder of interior design firm Pure Coalesce, offers practical home décor advice.



Q I'm redecorating and would like to give my home a classical look. Any advice?

A. In today's context, the approach to the classical design is much subtler, the colours used are lighter and intricate pieces end up looking well balanced. For colours and wall treatments, opt for pastel shades such as vintage blues and greens. You can choose one wall as a focal point of the room and dress it up with classical wallpaper. A traditional woven carpet will never go out of style and investing in a quality piece is wise. Show it off by using a coffee table with arched legs and borders, with a glass top. And finally, a classical chandelier is one of the most important pieces – it can be used in modern settings too because nothing beats the grandeur and elegance of a classical chandelier.

Q I've heard sponges are a breeding hub for bacteria in a kitchen. Is this true, and how often should I clean it?

A. We often ignore to clean the sponges we use to wash our dishes. It is important to keep it clean and store them in a clean soap dish when not in use – this helps dry them out. Bacteria usually dies without moisture and food. I would also recommend keeping a separate sponge to clean dishes or chopping boards that you have been used to handle raw meat. Also, do not invest in expensive sponges as they should be thrown out every week. If you do want to wash it, do so in a washing machine – not a dishwasher – or sterilise them by soaking it for a minute in one cup of water mixed with two teaspoons of chlorine bleach. Rinse thoroughly before drying.



SEAR WITH PASSION

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Tried & tasted

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Thai



Where: Sukhothai, Le Meridien Dubai

What's it like: One of the most established Thai restaurants in town, this charming establishment is nestled in the lush surrounds of the Meridien village, a lovely alfresco-friendly venue that never fails to be bustling and lively any night of the week. With traditional Thai arches at the doorways and waitresses in Thai costumes setting the tone, the restaurant interiors are done up in warm woods, but most people, including ourselves, prefer to sit outdoors as long as the weather lasts.

The menu offers a wide array of Thai classics, which we opted to sample with the appetiser selection platter – a spread including Thai fish cake, chicken satay, chicken dumpling, chicken wrapped in pandan leaf, and my favourite, prawn lemongrass, a lollipop of prawn meat skewered on and assimilating the fragrances of a lemongrass stick. What I really liked was the option of ordering most things in half portions, including this platter, ensuring minimal wastage.

For mains, I chose the chef-recommended steamed seafood wrapped in banana leaves, which paired well with the crabmeat fried rice I ordered on the side. My partner ordered a stir-fried chicken with cashew nuts and vegetables, a dry, spicy mix, along with vegetable fried rice – while it was tasty, it felt more like Chinese than Thai in flavours.

Full with our hearty meal so far, we shared a baked coconut custard for dessert, to end the meal on a suitably tropical note. And to ensure we take that Thai feeling home with us, we were also given a little gift when walking out.

Best for:
A relaxed
family meal

If you want to go: Average price for dinner for two without drinks is Dhs350. To celebrate the Songkran festival, Sukhothai is offering an all-you-can-eat lunch for Dhs149, and dinner for Dhs199 (including drinks), from April 10-18. Call 04-2170000.

- Sudeshna Ghosh

Where: Busaba Eathai

What's it like: This popular casual dining restaurant brand from London has just opened shop in the far right corner of The Beach complex. The outpost here resembles its British counterpart, with a few local additions added – including the dessert menu and terrace. The communal wooden tables, open kitchen, tanks of floating sunflowers and candles give the place a relaxed vibe.

My dining partner and I chose to dine alfresco, and began with a refreshing mango lassi, and jasmine, banana and orange smoothie with crunchy passion fruit seeds. Sharing-style dishes, like a moreish Thai calamari with green peppercorn was one of our choices for appetisers. The chunky calamari pieces coated with ginger and spices, had the right kick of tangy, and slightly sweet and spicy flavours – diners in London apparently queue for this treat, and we completely understand why! We also shared the tender chicken satay, for appetisers, followed by the highly recommended Chiang mai noodle soup – noodles dunked in a flavoursome chicken curry coconut sauce, topped with crisp noodles. Another favourite was the innovative Sen Chan pad Thai made with rice noodles, tart green mango, chunks of crabmeat and shrimp, which provided a burst of flavours, in every meaty, crunchy bite. This was eaten with plump, juicy sweet and spicy chilli prawns, and thick, finger-sized cod pieces with Thai garlic, crunchy krachai (a root from the ginger family) lime and chilli. You can't leave without trying the aromatic Mussaman duck curry – the meat tastes like tender beef!

End with a porridge-like black sticky rice pudding with coconut, and cooked taro, or the Thai ruby, for a surprising combination of jelly-like textures all drowned in coconut milk and ice shavings. For something more modern, the chocolatey Gingerette is perfect. Overall, this Thai eatery brings together a laid-back ambience, to complement the reasonably priced menu – I don't doubt we will be returning soon.

If you want to go: Around Dhs220 for meal for two, visit facebook.com/busabadubai.

- Nicola Monteath

Best for:
Weekend date
with friends



Photographs SUPPLIED and by REVIEWER

LURPAK® SPICED MOROCCAN CHICKEN WITH LEMON POTATOES

ADVERTISEMENT

PREP



20 mins

COOK



2hrs

SERVES



What you need:

- Lurpak® Cooking Mist
- 1 whole chicken, roughly 2kg
- Juice of one lemon
- 1 chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- 1 tsp. Ras-el-hanout
- 500g potatoes, washed and cut into wedges
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 star anise
- Finely grated rind of one lemon, or one preserved lemon that has been finely chopped
- 300ml chicken stock
- 6 garlic cloves, unpeeled

What you do:

Pre-heat the oven to 200°C / 220°C Fan Assisted / Gas Mark 7. Spray the chicken generously with Lurpak® Cooking Mist, squeeze over the lemon juice and season with salt and black pepper. Place the chicken in a large roasting tray, breast-side down, and roast for 20 minutes.

Mix the chopped chilli and Ras-el-hanout in a small bowl.

Remove the chicken from the oven, turn it over and coat with the spice mixture. Add the potatoes in the roasting tin, along with the cinnamon stick, bay leaf, star anise and grated lemon rind or chopped preserved lemon.

Pour in the chicken stock and scatter over the garlic cloves.

Reduce the oven to 160°C / 180°C Fan Assisted / Gas Mark 3 and roast the chicken for 1 ½ hours, or until the juices run clear. Remove the chicken from the pan and cover lightly in foil, drain off the leftover juices into a jug and return the potatoes to the oven for 10 minutes.

Serve immediately.



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Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this month.

✴ Innovative Indian

Indian food lovers are in for a treat with the launch of the spring menu at Tresind Dubai, Radisson Royal Hotel. You can opt for the à la carte, or Chef's tasting menu, to try some of the creative offerings such as a deconstructed pani puri shot (a bubble filled with tangy water), chicken shawarma kulcha (stuffed bread), lobster with flower petals and foam, and Mangalorean fish curry. Don't miss the divine, innovative black forest dessert which is created at the table – with whipped cream dunked into liquid nitrogen to form chunky, hard pieces of cream – and finished with chocolate sauce drizzled all over.

From Dhs325 per person for the set menu. Call 04-3080440.



✴ Truck to tuck into!

If you see Jake's by The Food Truck at one of the Ripe markets, or across Dubai, stop by to try new additions to the menu like The Shaka – the chicken bagel burger with chipotle mayo, beetroot, and emmental cheese, or Hang Ten, the veggie bagel burger with harissa spicy sauce and cheddar cheese.

Find TheFoodTruckDubai on Facebook for location information.

✴ Time to try Thai

Head to Benjarong, Dusit Thani Dubai, to celebrate Songkran (the water festival) with a Thai set menu featuring dishes like stir-fried sweet turnips with egg, chilli stuffed minced chicken, and Thai sweet beef with vegetables, among other offerings.

For lunch and dinner, Dhs149 per person. Call 04-3433333.

✴ Family outing

Take the family to Pascal Tepper French Bakery (IPIC Tower) in Abu Dhabi, and unwind with authentic French dishes, salads, and sandwiches. Little ones can also try out their baking classes.

Friday, Dhs99 per adult and Dhs69 per child. Call 02-4444762.

✴ Creative brunch

Looking for a brunch with a difference? Head to the Toy Brunch at China Grill Restaurant and Lounge, The Westin Mina Seyahi Beach Resort and Marina, to try the eight course menu featuring sushi art boats, graffiti dim sum trollies with lobster siew mai in lobster broth and steamed duck jiaozi, and edamame with lava rock salt and yuzu miso butter for starters. Share sushi and futomaki platters of Wagyu beef roll, and kiniko roll (shiitake, maitake, tempura enoki and black truffle), followed by small plates of soft shell crab, and barbecued pulled lamb, and main course options like grilled garlic shrimp with black fettuccini. A Peking duck station is also on offer. End with a dessert platter of cheesecake lollipops and grill fruit sashimi.

Friday, from Dhs450 per person. Call 04-5117333.

✴ Europe on a plate

Maison Mathis has opened its second outlet at Dusit Thani Dubai, showcasing European specialties for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Relish dishes like rotisserie chicken, Belgian-style fish and chips, grilled prawns and sandwiches and salads, in an all-white space flooded with sunlight.

Call 04-3598190.

✴ Film meets food

Studio Masr, the casual eatery themed around the Egyptian movie production studio of the same name, has opened its Dubai outlet at Box Park (the first one is in Abu Dhabi). Head there to try Lebanese mezze, mixed Arabic meat and seafood grills, which arrive in a gorgeous treasure box-style portable grill, and desserts – all of which are named after popular Arabic movies.

Call 04-3855883.



Doha Dining

✴ New year menu

Savour a lovely Thai set menu dinner of seven dishes for Songkran, at Nusantara, Four Seasons Hotel Doha, and try all-time favourites like red curry shrimps, and mango sticky rice for dessert.

April 13-15, QR300 per person. Call (+974)4 4494 8600.

✴ Tea time delight


Take your girlfriends along to the limited edition Chakai Afternoon Tea, part of the Cherry Blossom festival offerings at Sarab Lounge, The St. Regis Doha, and enjoy a selection of sweet and savoury treats, while sitting back and chatting.

April 19-25, QR180 per person. Call (+974)4 446 0000.

✴ Go Greek

Greek food lovers can learn how to make authentic specialties at The Greek week taking place at The Cellar, Oryx Rotana Doha from April 8-15. Watch renowned TV chef Giannis Solkis cook traditional food, and indulge in a special lunch soon after. A number of Greek-themed dinners and events will be also be taking place during the week.

April 11, QR200 per person.

Call (+974)4 402 3333. 



✴ An entertaining dinner

Treat a loved one to an intimate dinner, complete with a theatrical show, at Dubai's award-winning hotspot, The Act Dubai at Shangri-La Hotel Dubai. A selection of new dishes have been added to the existing sharing-style menu – choose from an innovative, tangy and sweet lobster panna cotta ceviche, and juicy salmon tartare on chips with balsamic reduction, for cold appetisers. Hot starters feature crisp, hot chicken croquettes, among others, and the must-try items for mains showcase a creamy, but light, quinoa risotto with black truffle shavings, tender 36 hour braised short rib with sweet potato truffle-infused purée, and a spicy Mediterranean seabass with fruit, which arrives in banana leaves. Polish off your meal with a banana mousse.

Sunday and Tuesday, from Dhs395 per person. Call 04-3511116.

✴ Lunch offer

Plan your business meeting at West 14th New York Bar and Grill, Oceana Beach Club, to try the 3 in 1 lunch offer, which features a three course meal of dishes like the mini burger, sticky calamari, and all-time favourite West 14th cheesecake. The menu changes on a daily basis, so there's something different to try every time.

Daily on weekdays, Dhs120 per person.

Call 04-4477601.

✴ French finesse

Plantation at Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach, has reopened its doors after a major makeover featuring large linen pendant lights, while the terrace features comfortable lounge seating. The highlight of the new menu is the Cassolette concept - slow cooked meat, poultry, fish, and cheese dishes, prepared in a cast-iron pot.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Call 04-4484733.

✴ Party brunch

Gather your friends and head to the Big Brunch on 8, Media One Hotel, to enjoy live entertainment, karaoke, and a selection of sushi, cold cuts and cheese, carvery, seafood, and drinks from the Mexican bar and Cuba Libre station. An array of decadent desserts are on offer to indulge in, before you head to the After Brunch party on The DEK on 8, for refreshments and DJ tunes.

Friday, Dhs595 per person. Call 04-4271000.



✴ Creekside dining

Bateaux Dubai has an all-new chef, menu and location! The luxurious dinner vessel is now situated on the Deira side of the creek, and offers dishes with seasonal produce, with a hint of Arabic flavours. Alaskan king crab with popcorn crusted langoustine, and Chilean seabass are just some of the delectable offerings.

Call 04-8145553.

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Make it tonight

Fresh ideas for midweek suppers that are tasty and good value too.

Recipes KATY GREENWOOD Photographs ROB STREETER



Bacon & avocado warm pasta salad

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 10 mins



300g orzo

1 tbsp sunflower oil

140g streaky bacon, chopped (you can also use turkey bacon)

140g cherry tomatoes, halved

95g pesto

2 avocados, stoned, peeled and sliced

70g bag rocket

Grana Padano shavings, to serve

1 Bring a large pan of water to the boil.

Cook the orzo following pack instructions, drain and set aside. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the bacon for 4-5

mins until crispy. Stir in the tomatoes and cook for a couple mins more. Stir in the orzo, pesto and avocado, and heat for 2 mins more.

2 Spoon onto a serving plate, then scatter with rocket leaves and Grana Padano.

PER SERVING energy 600 kJ • fat 33g • saturates 7g • carbs 54g • sugars 4g • fibre 7g • protein 17g • salt 1.9g



Seafood tagine

SERVES 4 PREP 5 mins COOK 15 mins
EASY **LOW FAT** **FOLATE** **FIBRE** **VIT C** **3 OF 5 A DAY** **GOOD 4 YOU**

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1 red pepper, deseeded and chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
2 tbsp harissa
800g canned chopped tomatoes
400g canned chickpeas
350g bag frozen seafood selection
300g couscous
Small handful of coriander, leaves only, roughly chopped
25g toasted flaked almonds
Zest and juice of ½ lemon, reserving the other ½ to serve

1 Heat the oil in a large pan and cook the onion and red pepper for about 5 mins until softened. Stir in the garlic, harissa and chopped tomatoes, and cook for about 10 mins until thickened. Add the frozen seafood and cook through, about 10 mins more.

2 Put the couscous in a serving bowl, pour over boiling water to cover, then cover with cling film. Leave to soak while the tagine cooks, then stir in most of the coriander, the almonds, lemon zest and juice, and seasoning. Serve the tagine with the couscous and cut the remaining lemon half into wedges to squeeze over. Sprinkle over the remaining coriander and serve.

PER SERVING energy 534 kJ • fat 11g • saturates 1g • carbs 72g • sugars 11g • fibre 10g • protein 32g • salt 1.7g

Baked eggs with potatoes, mushrooms & cheese

SERVES 4 PREP 10 mins COOK 25 mins
EASY **V** **CALCIUM** **FOLATE** **FIBRE** **1 OF 5 A DAY** **GLUTEN FREE**

3 baking potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 tbsp sunflower oil
600g mushrooms, quartered
2 garlic cloves, sliced
2 tbsp thyme leaves
140g cheddar, grated
4 eggs

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Put the potatoes in a pan of water, bring to the boil,

cook for 5 mins, then drain. Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Cook the potatoes, mushrooms and garlic for 5-8 mins to soften the mushrooms and brown the edges of the potatoes. Stir in half the thyme and cook for 1 min more.

2 Spoon the potato mixture into a baking dish and sprinkle with the cheese and the remaining thyme. Make holes in the mixture and break in 4 eggs. Bake in the oven for 12-15 mins until the eggs are set and the cheese has melted.

PER SERVING energy 493 kJ • fat 22g • saturates 10g • carbs 42g • sugars 2g • fibre 7g • protein 27g • salt 0.9g >>



Ginger miso aubergine noodles

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 10 mins



400g soba noodles
1 tbsp sunflower oil
2 aubergines, diced
4cm piece of ginger, grated
100g brown rice miso paste
2 tbsp sesame oil
2 tbsp mirin
1 tsp sugar
1 tbsp rice wine vinegar
1/2 a bunch of spring onions, sliced diagonally

1 Bring a pan of water to the boil and cook the noodles following pack instructions. Meanwhile, heat the sunflower oil in a frying pan. Cook the aubergines over a medium heat for 5-8 mins until softened.
2 Mix together the ginger, miso paste, sesame oil, mirin and sugar, add to the pan with the aubergines and cook for a few mins. Drain the cooked soba noodles and add to the pan, toss together, then divide between serving plates and scatter with the spring onions.

PER SERVING energy 518 kJ • fat 12g • saturates 2g • carbs 82g • sugars 11g • fibre 8g • protein 15g • salt 51g



Roast salmon with pesto sauce & beetroot slaw

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 12 mins



1 1/2 tbsp olive oil
4 salmon fillets
2 raw beetroots, about 250g, peeled and coarsely grated
175g celeriac, peeled and coarsely grated
2 carrots, about 175g, coarsely grated
1 tbsp cider vinegar
2 tbsp mixed seeds, toasted
2 tbsp pesto
4 tbsp soured cream

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan and line a baking tray with foil. Season the salmon fillets and put them on the tray, skin-side down. Drizzle the tops with a little oil and cook for 10-12 mins.

2 Meanwhile, in a bowl, combine the beetroot, celeriac, carrots, vinegar, remaining oil, the seeds and some seasoning. Spoon the pesto and soured cream into a small bowl, mix, then season. Serve the salmon fillets with the crunchy slaw and pesto sauce.

PER SERVING 507 kJ • protein 36g • carbs 14g • fat 32g • sat fat 7g • fibre 8g • sugar 12g • salt 11g

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Midweek made healthier

In the second of our two-part series, we show you how easy and tasty it is for the whole family to eat healthy throughout the week.

Mediterranean sardine salad

SERVES 4 PREP 15 mins NO COOK

EASY **HEART HEALTHY** **CALCIUM** **OMEGA-3** 

90g bag salad leaves

Handful of black olives, roughly chopped

1 tbsp capers, drained

**240g canned sardines in tomato sauce,
drained and sauce reserved**

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp red wine vinegar

Divide the salad leaves between four plates, then sprinkle over the olives and capers.

Roughly break up the sardines and add to the salad. Mix the tomato sauce with the oil and vinegar to make a dressing and drizzle over the salad.

PER SERVING energy 140 kcals • fat 10g • saturates

2g • carbs 1g • sugars 1g • fibre 1g • protein 10g

• salt 0.90g >>

TIP Tinned sardines are a fantastic source of omega-3, which is vital for heart health and vitamin D, which helps with the absorption of calcium.



Harissa lamb & hummous flatbreads

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 12-16 mins **EASY**

2 lamb leg steaks
1 tbsp harissa
4 wholemeal flatbreads
4 tbsp ready-made hummous
2 carrots, grated
Handful of parsley leaves, chopped

1 Heat the grill to high. Place the lamb on a baking tray, rub all over with the harissa and season. Grill for 6-8 mins, turning halfway through cooking. When the lamb is cooked to your liking, remove to a plate and allow to rest for a couple of mins.

2 Meanwhile, warm the flatbreads, then spread each with 1 tbsp hummous. Mix the carrot and parsley. Slice the lamb and scatter down the middle of each flatbread. Top with carrot, drizzle over any resting juices, roll up and eat.

PER SERVING energy 390 kcs • fat 17g • saturates 6g • carbs 34g • sugars 4g • fibre 4g • protein 28g • salt 1.45g

TIP Look for authentic flatbreads rather than wraps for this dish, as they will hold the filling better.



Rosti-topped fish pie

SERVES 3 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 25 mins

EASY **LOW CAL**

300g waxy potatoes, halved
250g skinless coley fillets (can be substituted with cod or haddock)
300ml milk
50g butter
1 leek, finely sliced
25g flour
2 tbsp parsley, chopped
2 tsp Dijon mustard

1 Cook the potatoes in boiling salted water for 5-7 mins, until almost tender but firm enough to grate. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Put the fish in a shallow saucepan and pour over the milk. Bring to a simmer and cook for 5 mins.

Drain the fish, reserving the milk, then set aside.

2 Heat half the butter in a pan, add the leek; cook for 5-6 mins until softened. Stir in the flour for 1 min, then remove from the heat. Gradually add the milk, stirring between each addition. Return to the heat and stir until the sauce comes to the boil. Simmer for 2 mins, then stir in the parsley and mustard.

3 Heat the grill to high. Flake the fish into large chunks, fold into the sauce, then place in a small ovenproof dish. Coarsely grate the potatoes. Melt the remaining butter, toss with the potatoes, season and scatter over the dish. Place under a medium grill for 5-10 mins until the potatoes are golden and tender.

PER SERVING energy 368 kcs • fat 17g • saturates 10g • carbs 29g • sugars 7g • fibre 4g • protein 23g • salt 1.1g

TIP Don't pile the potato too high on the pie, or it might not cook through.

Gluten-free



Roast sea bass & vegetable traybake

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 30 mins
EASY **LOW CAL** **1 OF 5 A DAY** **GOOD 4 YOU** **GLUTEN FREE** **VIT C**

300g red-skinned potatoes, thinly sliced into rounds

1 red pepper, cut into strips

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 rosemary sprig, leaves removed and very finely chopped

2 sea bass fillets

25g pitted black olives, halved

½ lemon, sliced thinly into rounds

Handful of basil leaves

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Arrange the potato and pepper slices on a large non-stick baking tray. Drizzle over 1 tbsp oil and scatter with the rosemary, a pinch of salt and a good grinding of pepper. Toss everything together well and roast for 25 mins, turning over halfway through, until the potatoes are golden and crisp at the edges.

2 Arrange the fish fillets on top and scatter over the olives. Place a couple of lemon slices on top of the fish and drizzle with the remaining oil. Roast for a further 7-8 mins until the fish is cooked through. Serve scattered with basil leaves.

PER SERVING energy 387 kcals • fat 17g • saturates 3g • carbs 28g • sugars 8g • fibre 5g • protein 28g • salt 0.7g

Gnocchi with lemon & chive pesto

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 5 mins
EASY **V**

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

Small bunch of parsley, finely chopped

Small bunch of chives, snipped

2 tbsp toasted pine nuts, roughly chopped

2 tbsp grated Parmesan, or vegetarian alternative, plus extra for serving
Zest and juice of 1 lemon

4 tbsp olive oil

500g pack gnocchi

1 Place the garlic, herbs, pine nuts, cheese and lemon zest in a small bowl, season well, then stir in the olive oil and lemon juice. Set aside.

2 Cook the gnocchi in a pan of salted boiling water following pack instructions, then drain well. Tip into a serving bowl and toss through the pesto. Serve with extra grated Parmesan, if you like.

PER SERVING energy 667 kcals • fat 15g • saturates 6g • carbs 85g • sugars 5g • fibre 4g • protein 15g • salt 2.7g **GI**



Cooking with chicken


Just what you're looking for! New ideas for simple suppers using one of your favourite ingredients.

Recipes SARAH COOK Photographs SAM STOWELL

Thai burgers with sweet potato chips & pineapple salsa

SERVES 4 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 45 mins

EASY **LOW FAT** **LOW CAL** **HEART HEALTHY** **FIBRE** **VIT C** **2 OF 5 A DAY**

 burgers only

4 sweet potatoes, unpeeled and cut into chunky chips

1 tbsp olive oil

400-500g chicken mince

2 tbsp Thai red curry paste

6 spring onions, chopped

Handful of coriander, chopped

200g pineapple chunks, diced

Juice of ½ lime

1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

2 tbsp sweet chilli sauce, plus extra for dipping

4 burger buns, toasted, and 1 Little Gem lettuce to serve

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Toss the sweet potato chips with the oil and some seasoning on a baking sheet. Roast for 40-45 mins until golden and crisp.

2 Mix the mince with the curry paste, half the spring onions, half the coriander and some seasoning. Shape into 4 burgers.

3 Mix remaining spring onions and

coriander with the pineapple, lime juice, red chilli and sweet chilli sauce.

4 When the chips have 10 mins to go, heat a non-stick frying pan or griddle and cook the burgers for 5 mins on each side until golden and cooked through. Serve the burgers in the buns with lettuce leaves and salsa piled on top, the sweet potato chips and extra chilli sauce for dipping.

PER SERVING 428 kcals • protein 34g • carbs 57g

• fat 8g • sat fat 1g • fibre 7g • sugar 17g • salt 2.0g

Super-healthy but you'd never guess!



Cheat's chicken Kiev

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY **GLUTEN FREE** **P**

5 tbsp cream cheese
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tbsp chopped or frozen parsley
or ½ tbsp dried
2 skinless chicken breasts
6 slices of pancetta (or turkey bacon)
Oil, for brushing

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan. Mix together the cream cheese, garlic and herbs with some seasoning. Cut a slit in the side of each chicken breast, ensuring you don't pierce through the other side. Using your fingers, make a bigger pocket and stuff the creamy mix inside. Season the chicken breasts, then wrap 3 slices of pancetta around each, covering the pocket tightly.

2 Put on a baking tray, brush with a little oil and bake for 18-20 mins until cooked through.

PER SERVING 459 kcal • protein 40g • carbs 1g

• fat 33g • sat fat 17g • fibre none • sugar none • salt 1.7g >>

**Our easiest-ever
chicken Kiev!**



Mexican chicken stew with rice & beans

SERVES 4-5 **PREP** 25 mins **COOK** 30 mins

EASY **LOW FAT** **LOW CAL** **FIBRE** **VIT C** **3 OF 5 A DAY** **GOOD 4 YOU** **GLUTEN FREE**

 stew only

1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, sliced
2 red peppers, deseeded and chopped into large chunks
3 tbsp chipotle paste (or gluten-free alternative)
800g canned chopped tomatoes
4 skinless chicken breasts
140g long grain rice
400g canned pinto beans, drained
Small handful of coriander, most chopped, a few leaves left whole
Juice of 1 lime
1 tbsp sugar
Natural yoghurt, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a deep frying pan and fry the onion and peppers for a few mins until softened. Stir in the chipotle paste for 1 min, followed by the tomatoes. Add the chicken breasts, with up to a tomato can-full of water to cover them, then gently simmer, turning occasionally, for 20 mins until the chicken is cooked through.

2 Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Add the rice and cook for 12-15 mins until tender, or following pack instructions, adding the beans for the final min. Drain well and stir in the coriander and lime juice, then check for seasoning before covering to keep warm.

3 Lift the chicken out onto a board and shred each breast using two forks. Stir back into the tomato sauce with the sugar, then season. Serve with the rice, scattering the stew with some coriander leaves just before dishing up and eating with a dollop of yoghurt sprinkled with black pepper on the side.

PER SERVING 361 kcal • protein 32g • carbs 45g
• fat 5g • sat fat 1g • fibre 6g • sugar 14g • salt 0.8g >>

Spice up your
evening meal



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Spinneys
The fresher experience

Italian chicken bake

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 50 mins

EASY 2 OF 5 A DAY

2 small or 1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
3 tbsp olive oil
2 tsp dried oregano
1,200g canned chopped tomatoes or cherry tomatoes
1 tbsp sugar

Little splash of red or white wine vinegar
About 500g cooked chicken, shredded into chunks

125g ball mozzarella

2 good handfuls of fresh breadcrumbs (or gluten-free alternative)

1 Fry the onion and garlic in the oil until softened. Add the oregano, tomatoes and sugar, a little splash of vinegar and some salt and pepper, then simmer for 20 mins

until the sauce is really thick. Stir in the chicken and transfer to a baking dish.

2 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Tear over the mozzarella in chunks, then scatter over with the breadcrumbs with a bit more ground pepper. Bake for 20 mins until the chicken is piping hot through and the top is golden and bubbling. Eat with mash, jacket potatoes, rice or pasta.

PER SERVING 475 kcals • protein 44g • carbs 21g
• fat 25g • sat fat 8g • fibre 4g • sugar 16g • salt 0.9g



**Great way to use up
roast chicken**



**Quick prep,
then leave to cook**

Easy one-pot chicken casserole

SERVES 4 PREP 5 mins COOK 50 mins



- 8 bone-in chicken thighs, skin pulled off and discarded**
- 1 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil**
- 5 spring onions, sliced, white and green parts kept separate**
- 2 tbsp plain flour**
- 2 chicken stock cubes**
- 2 large carrots, cut into batons**
- 400g new potatoes, halved if large**
- 200g frozen peas**
- 1 tbsp grainy mustard**
- Handful of fresh soft herbs, like parsley, chives, dill or tarragon, chopped**

1 Put the kettle on. Fry the thighs in the oil in a flameproof casserole dish or wide pan with a lid to quickly brown. Stir in the whites of the spring onion with the flour, crumble in the stock cubes and stir for 1-2 mins. Gradually stir in 750ml hot water from the kettle. Throw in the carrots and potatoes, bring to a simmer. Cover and cook for 20 mins.

2 Take off the lid and simmer for 15 mins more, then throw in the peas for another 5 mins. Season, stir in the mustard, green spring onion bits, herbs and some seasoning.

PER SERVING 386 kcals • protein 43g • carbs 32g

• fat 10g • sat fat 2g • fibre 6g • sugar 8g • salt 2.1g



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Kitchen notes

Nutrition advice,
cooking tips and
product picks for
your pantry.



Reader tip of the month

To avoid meat or vegetables from sticking to a grill or cast iron pan, cut half an onion, dip it in any flavourless oil, and rub the pan with it.

- Sreekutty S Rupesh



Got a great tip you want to share?

Get in touch with us on facebook or twitter



STAY SAFE



April 7 marks World Health Day, and the World Health Organization has chosen food safety as the topic for 2015. While we all may know the basic food safety rules, it's easy to forget them when hurrying around a busy supermarket or kitchen. Here are some golden rules you should always remember:

- Always buy meat and fish towards the end of your shopping trip, and keep it away from all other produce in your cart.
- Cooked food should always be stored in covered containers, and not just placed on a plate, in the fridge.
- Frozen food should be defrosted in the fridge, and not the kitchen counter or sink.
- Never put cooked meat back on the same plate that the raw meat was kept on.

SMART FOOD SWAPS

240
calories
2 chicken satay sticks

Swap for

238
calories
200g fish and vegetable bake

or

62
calories
250ml homemade chicken noodle soup

or

170
calories
150g firm tofu with 100g mixed boiled vegetables



Produce in the post!

Raw Bites, an online store which retails a wide selection of raw, vegan products, has launched an organic vegetable box delivery service, sourcing produce from farms in the region. Special juicing boxes are available, as well as customised options, in small and large sizes.

The best part is that you can have it delivered right to your doorstep (in Dubai), designated pick-up spots are available for those living in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. Each box is from Dhs100-150 (free delivery above Dhs100). Visit raw-bites.ae.

Health update> GO COCO!

Coconut oil, while widely used in many traditional cuisines for centuries, is now seeing a surge in popularity among nutritionists for its super-charged health benefits. Here's why you should make the switch to coconut oil:

- 1) The oil contains medium-chain fatty acids which are second only to glucose as a fuel source for the brain and nervous system, helping to improve brain function.
- 2) The oil aids in combating acid reflux, as it has antibacterial properties which help flush out bacteria. It also provides comfort for those in pain, as it coats the throat lining.
- 3) It can help you lose weight, while increasing metabolism levels. The fatty acids in the oil are water-soluble, this helps you digest coconut oil quicker than any other oils.

Look what we found! 3 great new products for your kitchen



Drizzle this Argan Virgin argan oil over salads, and stir-fries for a nutritious boost. Dhs115 (100ml) at Jones the Grocer.



Top your toast with this handmade Mango and Lime jam to give it a sweet-and-tart kick. Dhs35 at chezcharles.ae.



Forget teary eyes in the kitchen, with the newly launched Nonions sautéed onion paste on hand, making curries and stir-frys will be a breeze. The all-natural, preservative-free pastes are available in fried and boiled varieties. Dhs5.50 at select supermarkets.

Thai specials



What better excuse than the Thai New Year to host a dinner party with an exotic twist?

MENU FOR 4

STARTER • Crab & corn cakes with chilli

dipping sauce

MAIN COURSE • Thai roast chicken with mango

& apple salad • Sticky coconut rice

DESSERT • Tropical fruits in lemongrass syrup



Crab & corn cakes with chilli dipping sauce, recipe p38

GETTING AHEAD

- Up to a day before, get the batter for the cakes ready, and prep all the other ingredients.
- Stuff the chicken up to a day ahead.
- Prep the mango salad earlier in the day.
- Chill the tropical fruits dessert for up to 6 hrs.

Thai roast chicken with mango & apple salad

SERVES 4 PREP 20 mins

COOK 30 mins **EASY** **LOW FAT**

FOR THE CHICKEN

10 shallots, halved

3 small red chillies, deseeded, half roughly chopped, half finely chopped

Zest and juice of 1½ limes

Thumb-length piece of ginger, grated

3 tsp sunflower oil

4 chicken breasts, skin on

FOR THE SALAD

2 red-skinned apples, cut into matchsticks

1 mango, peeled and cut into matchsticks

1 small bunch mint, leaves picked

4 spring onions, sliced

Small bunch coriander, leaves picked (from the same bunch as the starter)

1 tsp fish sauce, plus a splash

½ tsp caster sugar

1 Whizz the shallots in a food processor until finely chopped, then remove half and set aside. Add the roughly chopped chilli, ¼ of the ginger and all the lime zest, then whizz to a chunky paste. Tip into a frying pan with 2 tsp oil and some seasoning, then fry for a couple of mins until fragrant.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Release the skin from the chicken breasts along one side and stuff with the shallot mix. (Can be done up to a day ahead.) Season the skin, then roast in a roasting tin for 15-20 mins until cooked through.

3 Meanwhile, make the rice - see left.

4 Toss together the apple, mango, mint,

spring onions and half the coriander. Mix the fish sauce, caster sugar, remaining ginger and lime juice, then set aside.

5 When the chicken is ready, remove it to a plate to rest. Sit the roasting tin on the hob, spoon off any excess fat, then gently heat, adding the remaining lime juice and a splash more fish sauce, scraping up the chicken juices. Chop remaining coriander, then stir into the sauce with the finely chopped chilli. Toss the salad with the dressing, then serve with the chicken, sauce and sticky rice.

PER SERVING 275 kcs • protein 33g • carbs 22g • fat 7g • sat fat 2g • fibre 4g • sugar 20g • salt 0.8g

Sticky coconut rice

SERVES 4 PREP 5 mins COOK 15 mins **EASY** **LOW FAT**

Soften the **reserved shallots** from the Thai roast chicken recipe in **1 tsp oil** for 2 mins, then stir in **2 tbsp creamed coconut** and **280g basmati rice**. Cover with enough cold water to come 1cm above the surface, bring to a simmer, cover, then cook for 8 mins. Stir, cover, then leave to stand off the heat for 5 mins.

PER SERVING 301 kcs • protein 6g • carbs 57g • fat 7g • sat fat 5g • fibre none • sugar 1g • salt 0.01g >>





Crab & corn cakes with chilli dipping sauce

MAKES 10 PREP 10 mins

COOK 15 mins



1 egg
4 tbsp plain flour
1 small garlic clove,
crushed

1 tbsp chopped coriander stalks (use the leaves for the main course)

340g canned sweetcorn, well drained

170g white crabmeat, flaked

2 spring onions, finely sliced

Sunflower or vegetable oil, for frying

FOR THE CHILLI DIPPING SAUCE

4 tbsp sweet chilli sauce

Juice of 1/2 a lime

1/2 finger-length chunk of cucumber,
seeds removed, flesh finely chopped

1 Tip the egg, flour, garlic and coriander stalks into a food processor with a third of the corn. Whizz to a smooth paste. Mix with the remaining corn, crab, half the spring onions and some seasoning.

2 Stir together the sauce ingredients. Cover a tray with kitchen paper. Heat 5cm depth oil in a large, heavy saucepan - it's ready when a cube of bread browns in 30-40 secs. Drop in dessertspoons of the corn mix and fry for 2-3 mins, turning, until golden and crisp. Lift onto kitchen paper. Keep warm. Repeat with the remaining mix. Serve the hot cakes sprinkled with the rest of the spring onion and the dipping sauce alongside.

PER CORN CAKE 149 kcals • protein 4g • carbs 16g

• fat 8g • sat fat 1g • fibre 1g • sugar 6g • salt 0.64g

Get ahead To prepare the Crab & corn cakes in advance, make the batter, then mix remaining corn, crab and spring onions together separately. At the last minute, mix crab and corn into the batter.



Tropical fruits in lemongrass syrup

SERVES 4 PREP 5 mins plus cooling COOK 5 mins



425g canned lychees in syrup

2 stems of lemongrass, halved and
bashed with a rolling pin

85g golden caster sugar

850g fresh mixed tropical fruits

100g seedless red grapes

6 macaroons or coconut biscuits,
to serve

1 Drain the lychees juice into a pan and put the lychees in a large serving bowl. Add the lemongrass and sugar to the pan, heat gently until the sugar dissolves, then boil for 1 min. Turn off the heat and set aside - the lemongrass will add flavour as it cools.

2 Strain the syrup over the lychees and tip in the fruits. Chill for up to 6 hrs. Serve with the macaroons or coconut biscuits and, if you want, a scoop of shop-bought mango sorbet.

PER SERVING 272 kcals • protein 2g • carbs 65g

• fat 0.3g • sat fat none • fibre 4g • sugar 65g • salt 0.03g

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French, with a twist



It makes for an unlikely combination, but when a Pakistani chef moves to France, the results can be interesting! France-based Michelin-star chef Sylvestre Wahid exclusively shares with us some of his French-Pakistani fusion creations.



Pakistani-born Sylvestre Wahid moved to France at the age of nine. The son

of a chef, he followed his father's footsteps, beginning his career as a commis chef for Thierry Marx at Le Cheval Blanc. He joined Alain Ducasse in France soon after (in 1997), and moved to his New York establishment in 2000. After his stint in the US, he moved back to France to work at Le Strato in Courchevel, where he received two Michelin stars when he was at the helm. He now works as a restaurant consultant, infusing his creativity and roots into traditional French cooking. He shared his innovative creations with us when in Dubai recently at the Taste of France week organised by Alliance Francaise, at Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach.

Blue lobster, roasted with spices, porcini mushrooms and Osetra caviar

SERVES 2 PREP 30mins COOK 15mins

MORE OF A CHALLENGE

2 Blue lobsters (around 500g each)

FOR THE STOCK

2l water

1 fennel

2 button mushrooms

1 onion

1 white leek

1 garlic bulb

1 bunch of celery

A pinch of fresh thyme, bay leaves, rosemary and basil (each)

2 lemon slices

FOR THE TRIMMINGS

60g porcini mushrooms

10cl olive oil

2 garlic cloves, unskinned

10g chives, chopped

A pinch of fleur de sel

A pinch of ground pepper

FOR THE LOBSTER SAUCE**Lobster heads****10cl olive oil****100g butter****10g shallots****5 garlic cloves, unskinned****10g tomato paste****10g garam masala****1l fish stock****A few basil leaves****2 lemon slices****FOR THE DRESSING****Coral from both lobsters****150ml partially whipped cream****15g Oscietra caviar****25g wild rocket leaves**

1 Remove the lobster heads and claws. Tie with a string so that the tails remain straight.

2 Mix together the stock ingredients and bring to boil. Cook the claws for 5 mins, and the tails for 4 mins. Remove the lobster meat carefully, and set aside.

3 Cut the mushroom to 1cm slices.

4 Heat olive oil in pan and add the garlic and mushrooms. Gently brown and season with salt and pepper. Add the chopped chives and set aside.

5 To make the sauce, grind the lobster heads and fry in a pan heated with olive oil. Add tomato paste and butter and brown for a few minutes. Add the herbs and then the masala spice. Cover with stock and bring to the boil, before simmering for 25 mins. Strain and keep aside the smooth sauce. Bring the sauce to boil and reduce to half of what it is now. Mix in the lobster coral and cook until it becomes thick.

6 Cut the lobster tail meat to round slices and fry in a pan brushed with olive oil and butter. Add the claw meat.

7 Separate the sauce into two equal parts, and when one part of it has cooled, add the caviar and lemon. To the other half of the sauce, add the whipped cream and mix well.

8 Dress each plate with sliced porcini mushrooms, lobster chunks and claws. Add the sauce with caviar on top, and then the thick cream sauce. Sprinkle with rocket leaves and serve.

PER SERVING 795 kJ • protein 35.4 • carbs 42.5g • fat 15.4g • sat fat 3.8g • fibre 11.7g • salt 3.7g



Roasted poultry, curry and coconut coat, with rice

SERVES 4 PREP 30mins COOK 1 hr**A LITTLE EFFORT****1.6kg whole chicken****1 tbsp of red curry paste****1 bunch of thyme****1 bunch of rosemary****10g of Espelette chili pepper****10cl olive oil****10 garlic cloves****1/2 bunch of thyme****5g of fleur de sel****FOR THE POULTRY JUICE****2kg poultry carcasses****1 onion****3 shallots****1 bunch of thyme****1 bunch of rosemary****1 bay leaf****150ml olive oil****50g butter****150ml white chicken stock****1 head of garlic****1 tbsp yellow curry powder****1 tbsp ginger, grated****2 lemongrass sticks****330ml orange juice****1 can of coconut milk****FOR THE RICE****250g Basmati rice****1 tbsp olive oil****1 bay leaf****2 cinnamon sticks****1 tbsp green cardamom****150ml coconut milk****1/2l white chicken stock****50g pineapple cubes****50g fresh coconut, grated****50g raisins****50g green apples****40 slices of fried onions (cut into rings)****1 bunch of flat-leaf parsley, fried**

1 Tie the wings and legs of the chicken with a thread. Empty out the insides. Put in the garlic cloves, thyme, rosemary, and season with fleur de sel and pepper.

2 Baste the poultry with the red curry paste and roast for 45mins at 220C. Set aside for 15 mins. Cut the poultry into four slices and arrange on a platter.

3 To make the poultry juice, heat the olive oil in a cast iron pot. Add the chicken carcasses, and when it reaches a brown colour, add the butter. Add in the herbs and sweat the onions for several minutes.

4 Remove the grease from the pot and deglaze with orange juice and coconut milk. Reduce it by half and add in the poultry juice, and herbs. Cook on low heat for 2-3 mins, and then strain the juice to reduce by half again.

5 Heat olive oil in a pan and add in the rice. Cook for 1 min, add the bay leaf, cinnamon stick and cardamom. Cook for 1 min more and add the coconut milk and white chicken stock. Cover and place in the oven at 220C for 15 mins. Once cooked, add all the fruit cubes, raisins, and coconut, and let it cook for several mins. Serve the rice with the chicken and garnish with the fried onion slices and flat-leaf parsley.

PER SERVING 1,250 kJ • protein 83g • carbs 72g • fat 95g • sat fat 32g • fibre 11g • sugar 30g • salt 3.5g >>



Zucchini flowers

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30mins **COOK** 30mins

A LITTLE EFFORT

6 zucchini flowers

FOR THE STUFFING

200g green beans

400g snow peas

400g peas from the pod

200g broccoli

1 bunch of mint leaves

1/4 bunch of cilantro

1/4 bunch of dill

1/4 bunch of basil

1/4 bunch of chives

200g goat's cheese

100g mascarpone

100g lightly whipped cream

200g parmesan, grated

100 ml olive oil

1 Espelette pepper

A pinch of coarse sea salt

A pinch of pepper

FOR THE SAUCE VIERGE

50g white onions

100g zucchini

100g eggplant

100g red bell pepper

100g green bell pepper

100g yellow bell pepper

1 tomato

100ml olive oil

1/2 bunch of mint

A pinch of thyme

1 garlic clove

FOR THE PEPPERMINT EMULSION

2 bunches of peppermint

300ml water

100g pears

200ml vegetable stock

5g lecithin

A pinch of coarse sea salt

A pinch of garam masala spice

1 Carefully remove the pistils and prickles of the zucchini flowers (on the outside), and blanch the stem for 2 mins, and the petals for 2 secs.

2 Finely chop the green beans, snow peas and broccoli. Peel the pea pods and boil each vegetable separately. Place the vegetables in an ice water bath to cool, then drain on paper towels.

3 Finely chop the cilantro, mint, basil, dill, and chives, and place in a bowl. Mix together the green vegetables, the finely chopped herbs, the fresh goat's cheese, lightly-whipped cream, mascarpone, and grated parmesan. Season with coarse sea salt, olive oil, Espelette pepper, and pepper. Stuff the zucchini flowers with the mixture.

4 Cut up the zucchini, eggplants, and peppers to make a brunoise. Sauté each vegetable separately in the olive oil.

5 Finely chop the onions and sweat in the olive oil. Add the thyme, garlic, and all the brunoise vegetables in and season. Add the finely chopped mint leaves and set aside.

6 Blanch the peppermint leaves in the water (reserve the cooking liquid). Then cool in a bowl of iced water. Blanch the peas and cool immediately. Blend the peas, add the peppermint leaves and white stock. Dilute with the peppermint cooking liquid to get a green coloured juice. Wait until the mixture is lukewarm, then add the lecithin and blend. Sprinkle with masala spice before serving.

PER SERVING 1,097 kJ • protein 41.5g • carbs 43g • fat 86.7g • sat fat 27g • fibre 13g • sugar 21.1g • salt 10g

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Spicy Grilled Shrimp Tacos



Flame-grilled Ribeye

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Get children cooking

Show kids how to make healthy dishes

Teach your kids about healthy eating by letting them loose in the kitchen – with a little help from you. They'll reward you by cooking a meal from scratch.

Best-ever pesto & potato pasta

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 11 mins

EASY   pesto only

150g green beans

300g new potatoes

300g short dried pasta like fusilli, or a long pasta like linguine

FOR THE PESTO

Large bunch of basil

50g pine nuts

50g Parmesan (or vegetarian alternative), grated, plus extra to serve (optional)

2 garlic cloves

100ml olive oil

PER SERVING (6) energy 540 kcal • fat 34g •

saturates 6g • carbs 46g • sugars 2g • fibre 4g

• protein 12g • salt 0.2g

Tip If you have any leftover pesto it will keep for 3 days in the fridge and any leftover pasta makes a great lunchbox salad for the next day.



1

Pick the basil for the pesto Get your child to pick the basil leaves off the stalks. Ask them to look at and smell the leaves as you tell them the name of the herb until they remember it – try to do this with all herbs when you can.



2

Make the pesto Toast the pine nuts in a pan over a low heat. A child of seven years plus can stir the nuts. Tip into a mini chopper (or use a pestle and mortar) with the basil, Parmesan, garlic and olive oil. Blitz or pound into a green sauce, then set aside.



3

Chop up the beans Using a child-friendly knife, get children from the age of five to chop the green beans into shorter lengths, and quarter the potatoes. Younger children can snap the beans into short lengths while you prepare the potatoes.



4

Cook the vegetables and pasta Bring a large pan of water to the boil, add the potatoes and boil for 3 mins. Remove from the heat and ask your child to tip in pasta and give it a stir. Put back on the heat, boil the pasta for 5 mins, add beans and cook for a final 3 mins.

What we've learnt

Children will love learning new skills with familiar ingredients.

• Cooking Pasta

Pasta has become a staple part of the family diet so it's really useful for children to know how to cook it. It's one of the first lessons of everyday cooking and very simple to make.

• Identifying Herbs/Ingredients

Every time you cook with an aromatic ingredient, encourage your child to smell or taste it and repeat its name. It's such a little thing, but it helps children to feel comfortable around food and excited about trying new ingredients.



5

Mix everything together Drain everything well and tip into a bowl. Spoon most of the pesto into the pasta and stir everything together to coat. Bring the large bowl of pasta to the table and serve with extra Parmesan, more basil and remaining pesto, if you like.

The whole family will
love digging into this



Thai celebrations



Sontaya at The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Abu Dhabi is all geared up for the Thai New Year Songkran festival on April 13. Here's a taster of what you can expect at the restaurant, from chef de cuisine Peter Peerapong.

Thai northern style braised veal brisket in Hang Lay sauce

SERVES 4 | PREP 2HRS 30 MINS

| COOK 40 MINS **A LITTLE EFFORT**

800g veal brisket
2l veal stock
6g Hang Lay curry powder (Available at leading supermarkets)
100g Panang curry paste
2 tbsp salt
30g baby potatoes
30g baby carrot
20g radish

FOR THE HANG LAY CURRY SAUCE

100g Panang curry paste
6g Hang Lay curry powder
50ml tamarind juice
70g palm sugar

1 tbsp salt
100ml veal stock

FOR THE GARLIC PURÉE

100g garlic, peeled
1 tbsp fresh ginger juice
Salt and pepper, to taste
Roasted hazelnuts, for garnish

1 In a large pot, add the brisket, stock, curry powder, paste, and salt. Simmer on low heat for 2 hrs, or until tender, remove the brisket from the stock and place the meat on a tray. Press the brisket down, by placing another tray on top of the meat, and refrigerate to cool down. Remove the brisket from the tray and cut into a square shape.

2 To make the curry sauce, cook the curry paste along with the Hang Lay curry powder in oil for 2 mins. Add the tamarind juice, palm sugar and salt, followed by 100ml of the veal stock.

3 Roast the baby potatoes and carrot at 180C for 12 mins. Thinly slice the radish.

4 To make the purée, blanch the garlic for 3 mins, and then blend with the rest of the ingredients until smooth.

5 Pan sear the brisket until brown, and add in the Hang Lay curry sauce. Place the meat on a plate with the vegetables. Serve with the purée and garnish with hazelnuts before serving.



Dine out in style

Head to the Sontaya Thai festival, part of Discover Thainess 2015, to try a contemporary set menu featuring signature seven dishes from various provinces in Thailand. April 12-10, Dhs300 per person. Call 02-4988001.



ST REGIS

SAADIYAT ISLAND • ABU DHABI

Lunch in the sun

Spread a little Mediterranean magic with this easy menu. Recipes MARY CADOGAN
Photographs MYLES NEW

Fennel & potato gratin

The sprightly aniseed flavour of fennel mellows considerably when cooked, it goes beautifully with the potatoes in this gratin.

SERVES 6 PREP 20 mins COOK 1½ hrs



- 2 fennel bulbs, trimmed**
- 3 tbsp olive oil**

1kg floury potatoes, thinly sliced (see tip)

300ml vegetable stock

250g cherry tomatoes, preferably on the vine

25g Parmesan (or vegetarian alternative), finely grated

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Quarter the fennel lengthways, and cut out and discard the root. Thinly slice the fennel.

Heat 2 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan, season the fennel and gently cook for about 5 mins until starting to soften.

2 Drizzle a little oil over the base of a 1.5-litre gratin dish. Arrange half the potatoes over the base, then season. Spread the fennel over, then cover with the remaining potatoes. Pour over the stock, season and drizzle with the remaining oil. Scrunch a piece of baking parchment around the edge of the dish to make a seal, then bake for 1 hr. Can be made a few hours ahead up to this point.

3 Remove the dish from the oven and put the tomatoes on top. Scatter over the Parmesan and return to the oven for 20 mins until the top is golden.

PER SERVING 212 kcs • protein 6g • carbs 30g
• fat 8g • sat fat 2g • fibre 5g • sugar 4g • salt 0.3g

TIP The potatoes need to be sliced thinly. A food processor or mandolin will save time.

Serve with

Spinach with raisins & pine nuts

You'll need to use the largest pan you've got, so that it's easy to wilt the spinach quickly and evenly.

SERVES 6 PREP 10 mins COOK 5 mins



- 2 tbsp olive oil**
- 2 rounded tbsp pine nuts**
- 2 rounded tbsp raisins**
- 500g baby spinach leaves**
- 2 tsp balsamic vinegar**

Heat the oil in a large pan, add the pine nuts and fry until golden. Add the raisins and fry briefly, then add the spinach leaves and turn in the pan over a fairly high heat until the leaves are just wilted. Sprinkle in the balsamic and seasoning, warm through and serve straight away.

PER SERVING 103 kcs • protein 3g • carbs 5g • fat 8g • sat fat 1g • fibre 2g • sugar 5g
• salt 0.3g

Roast pork with fennel & rosemary

SERVES 6 **PREP** 25 mins plus optional 24 hrs marinating **COOK** 2 hrs **EASY** **GLUTEN FREE** **P** **VEG**

2 tsp fennel seeds
1 tsp black peppercorns
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 orange, with zest from 1/2, grated
1 tbsp rosemary, finely chopped
1 tbsp olive oil
1.5kg pork roasting joint, such as boned shoulder or loin (can be swapped for beef brisket)
1 onion, thickly sliced
400ml white wine
1 tbsp redcurrant or other fruit jelly

1 Crush the fennel seeds and peppercorns coarsely using a pestle and mortar. Add the garlic and some salt, and crush again to make a paste. Stir in orange zest along with the rosemary and oil.

2 Rub the paste all over the pork, then cover with foil. You can now cook the pork or leave it covered in the fridge for up to 24 hrs.

3 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Thickly slice the orange and place in the base of a roasting tin with the onion. Put the pork on top and pour 600ml water into the tin. Roast the joint for 1 hr, add the wine to the tin, then roast for 1 hr more. Baste the joint a few times and add a splash more water if needed.

4 Remove the joint from the oven, strain off the meat juices, tightly cover joint with foil, then leave to rest for 15 mins. Pour meat juices into a pan, add the jelly and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve it. Taste and add seasoning if necessary. Thickly slice the pork and serve with a little of the juices poured over.

PER SERVING 492 kcs • protein 44g • carbs 7g
• fat 28g • sat fat 9g • fibre 1g • sugar 6g • salt 0.4g

Tender meat scented with fennel and rosemary

Impressive yet
so simple

Pistachio ice cream

SERVES 6 with leftovers **PREP** 45 mins plus freezing
COOK 5 mins **EASY** ❄️

100g shelled pistachios
150ml milk
100g golden caster sugar
300ml double cream
300ml ready-made custard
1/2 tsp almond extract

1 Reserve a quarter of the pistachios and finely grind the remainder in a food processor. Tip into a pan with the milk and sugar, and bring gently to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Remove from the heat, leave to cool, then chill.

2 Finely chop the reserved pistachios. Whip the cream to soft peaks. Fold in the custard, then the nut milk until evenly mixed. Churn in an ice cream machine or put the bowl in the freezer until the mixture is set 5cm in from the edges. Remove and whisk to break down the large ice crystals. Freeze and whisk again, then transfer to a rigid container and scatter with the chopped pistachios. Freeze completely until firm.

3 Half an hour before serving, transfer the ice cream to the fridge to soften.

PER SERVING 473 kcals • protein 6g • carbs 29g • fat 37g • sat fat 18g • fibre 1g • sugar 26g • salt 0.1g **BT**

TIP When making ice cream without an ice cream machine, just leave the mixture in the bowl with the whisk and set the whole thing in the freezer. This makes it easy to give it a whisk a couple of times before tipping it into a container to set completely.

Fig tartlets

Take just five ingredients and you've got a dessert with real wow factor, but so easy – and you can do most of the prep ahead, too.

MAKES 6 **PREP** 15-20 mins **COOK** 18-20 mins

EASY ❄️

375g pack all-butter puff pastry, thawed if frozen

6 fresh figs

25g butter, melted

2 tbsp icing sugar, plus extra for dusting

2 tbsp raspberry or bramble jelly

Pistachio ice cream (see recipe, right) or crème fraîche, to serve


1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Line a large baking sheet with baking parchment. Divide

the pastry into 6 pieces. Roll out each piece to the thickness of around 3mm and cut into a 11-12cm round, using a cutter or saucer as a guide. Place on the baking sheet and mark 1cm in from the edge, taking care not to cut right through the pastry. Fork over the pastry inside the marked line.

2 Slice each fig and arrange, overlapping, inside the marked line of the tartlets. Brush with the butter and sprinkle with icing sugar. *Can now be chilled for up to 5 hrs.* Bake for 18-20 mins until the pastry is crisp and golden on the edges.

3 Warm the jelly in a small pan, brush over the tartlets, then dust with more icing sugar. Serve warm from the oven or at room temperature, with Pistachio ice cream (right) or crème fraîche.

PER TARTLET 318 kcals • protein 4g • carbs 34g • fat 18g • sat fat 9g • fibre 1g • sugar 14g • salt 0.6g



**Steak tartare,
duck egg yolk
and croutons**



Grant Bruntsden began his culinary training at the Inn On The Lake in his hometown Surrey, UK, and

has since travelled quite a bit to pursue his career. His experience at British restaurants, as well as with Asian cuisine at Zuma and Tsunami in London, Ai in New Delhi, and MINT Restaurant and Grill in Shanghai, led him to taking up the Executive chef position at Fume, Pier 7, last year.

Sharing-style party menu

Forget slaving over the stovetop, your next dinner party can be as gourmet as it is relaxed, with this easy menu from Fume's Executive Chef Grant Bruntsden.

Photographs ANAS CHERUR

Text and styling by NICOLA MONTEATH. Props from GRATE AND BARREL and DAGO.

Steak tartare, duck egg yolk and croutons

SERVES 4 **PREP** 25 mins **NO COOK** **EASY**

250g rump fillet or rump heart, cleaned and diced

12g baby capers

110g shallots, finely chopped

4 anchovy fillets, finely chopped

1 baguette, sliced

4 duck egg yolks

A pinch of freshly cracked black pepper and Maldon sea salt

FOR THE DRESSING

1 egg yolk

10g Worcestershire sauce

5g sambal olek sauce

75g shallots, finely chopped

100g grapeseed oil

10g flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

1 Mix all the dressing ingredients in a bowl, apart from the grapeseed oil, and then slowly add the oil to emulsify the dressing.

2 Bring the beef down to room temperature for 10 mins - if chilled - and mix with the dressing.

3 Slice the baguette thinly then toss in olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place on a flat tray with baking paper and cook in the oven at 180C until crispy.

4 Arrange the meat on a plate or in a bowl, and make a small well in the centre for the egg yolk. Season and arrange the bread on the side before serving.

PER SERVING 453 kcals • protein 19g • carbs 55g • fat 17g • sat fat 10g • fibre 6g • sugar 11g • salt 1.7g

Tip Mix the egg yolk through the beef mixture, at the dinner table, to add an interactive touch, and give it a creamier texture.



Fish and seafood pie

SERVES 4 **PREP** 2 hrs **COOK** 20-25 mins **EASY**

25g butter

35g panko bread crumbs

35g parmesan cheese, grated

FOR THE FISH PIE MIX

1kg mixed seafood (boneless cod and sea bream, mussels, whole shrimps), cut into big chunks with skin removed

1.2kg potatoes

2 egg yolks

100ml double cream

50g dill, finely chopped

Sea salt, to taste

Ground black pepper, to taste

FOR THE FISH VELOUTE

100g butter

200g plain flour

1l fish stock

300ml double cream

Dijon mustard, to taste (optional)

1 Season all the seafood with salt, pepper and dill and mix well. Set aside to drain in a

colander for 1 hr - to drain the excess water.

2 Steam the potatoes until tender. Remove and mash while still hot. Once the potato is mashed, whip in egg yolks and the double cream, and season if required.

3 To make the velouté, melt the butter in a pan, then add the flour. Mix and set aside. Bring the fish stock to boil, then add cream and Dijon mustard, if using. Reduce to half, and then whisk in the butter and flour mixture. Cook for at least 15 mins, stirring continuously, until the flour taste has gone. Add a little more water if it is too thick.

4 To make the topping, melt the butter in a pan and add the bread crumbs to it. Sauté until it becomes golden in colour.

5 In a baking dish, place the seasoned fish and seafood with the velouté - adding it a little at a time, so you don't have a sloppy mix. Top with the mash and breadcrumb mix. Add a layer of parmesan cheese and bake for 20 to 25 mins at 190C until you have a crisp, golden coloured topping.

PER SERVING 453 kcals • protein 19g • carbs 55g • fat 17g • sat fat 10g • fibre 6g • sugar 11g • salt 1.7g >>

Apple pie

SERVES 4 PREP 1 hr COOK 45 mins **EASY**

2kg Granny smith apples

200g caster sugar

50g butter, unsalted

20g cinnamon powder

A sprinkle of icing sugar

Double cream, to serve

Vanilla ice cream, to serve

FOR THE SWEET PASTRY PIE

900g all-purpose flour

300g butter, unsalted

30g baking powder

500ml double cream

2 egg whites, for the pastry

A pinch of sugar, to sprinkle on top

Vanilla ice cream, to serve with

1 Peel and chop the apples.

2 In a saucepan, melt the butter and add the cinnamon. Add half of the chopped apples and 50g of the sugar, and cook until tender. Then, add the rest of the apples and cook till they become tender. Taste for sweetness, if the apples are still a bit tart, add the remaining sugar. Chill.

3 Sieve all the flour and baking powder into a bowl then rub in the butter until your mixture resembles crumbs. Make a well in the middle and pour in the double cream – knead to make a soft dough. Cover with cling wrap and chill for 30 mins.

4 Place the chilled apple compote in a deep pie dish.

5 Roll out the pie dough and cut into 20-25 strips. Place the strips horizontally and then vertically to make a lattice design on top. Brush with egg white and sprinkle a pinch of sugar. Bake at 170C for 45 mins, until the top is golden and crisp.

6 Dust icing sugar all over the pie once baked, and drizzle the double cream all over. Serve with a tub of vanilla ice cream on the table, so that everyone can help themselves to it.

PER SERVING 453 kcals • protein 19g • carbs 55g
• fat 17g • sat fat 10g • fibre 6g • sugar 11g • salt 1.7g **BT**



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NEW EXPERIENCES

Well-loved American casual dining chain Chili's is going through a makeover! Mohammed Al Delail, Chief Operations Officer of the Saleh Bin Lahej Group talks us through the million dollar rebranding exercise and all the changes diners can expect at their outlets.



Tell us what brought about the decision to reinvent the Chili's brand, and what aspects has it involved?

This was done to keep up with the new school mind-set, as everything around us evolves with time, our brand should also do the same. The Chili's 'More Life Happens Here' tagline is the over-arching theme for Chili's in all global markets, but its scope has been expanded. It's all about a sense of discovery, an interest in experiences over material things, and authentic connections with things that are share-able – like a freshly prepared lunch or dinner at Chili's. Our main objective is to be the first choice in our customers' mind, and this is what our new tagline speaks about. It is about stories that are shared, the connections that are made, and the food and drinks that help fuel the vibrancy that defines the Chili's dining experience. We hope that this campaign will play a major role in making

customers remember us when dining out. Our rebranding is taking place all over the world and not only in our logo appearance and tagline, but also in all our restaurant's interior design. So wherever you go, you will always feel that more life happens at Chili's.

How has the new direction affected the restaurant's kitchens?

One of the changes we've made is revamping all the kitchen equipment. We anticipate that the upgraded equipment will consistently provide a high quality product at a faster pace. The flexibility of our equipment allows for the development of new menu categories that we believe results in increased guest satisfaction.

Has a new menu also been devised to match the revamp?

We continually evaluate our menu at Chili's to





improve quality, freshness and value by introducing new items and improving existing favourites. We believe these changes as well as our ability to develop new and innovative items will further increase our popularity among diners. We are committed to offering a compelling everyday menu that provides items diners prefer, at a solid value.

Could you please take us through the thought process behind this menu, and some of the new items that have been included?

We always try our best to satisfy our customers' needs and follow trends, which is why we come up with new items and run small tests to get our customers' feedback prior to launching something new on the menu. If we see that the feedback is positive and customers really like it and start asking for that dish, then we include as part of our menu. As of now, a new selection of burgers, salads, and a unique way of serving our famous fajitas has been introduced. We have also added fresh and healthier items to most of our menu selections.

Name a few dishes that we should try at Chili's!

We highly recommend the Fajita Trio, Margarita Chicken, Quesadillas, Chicken crispers, and Molten cake for dessert.

For restaurant reservations, call 600 561112.



AN ALL-TIME FAVOURITE

Try this classic Chili's recipe at home.

Quesadilla Explosion

SERVES 2 PREP 15MINS COOK 20 MINS

600-800g of chicken, grilled
170g mixed salad leaves
258g tortilla wraps, cut into strips
8 tbsp of fresh corn
¼ tsp of mixed dried cilantro and black pepper
15ml ranch dressing or balsamic vinegar
125g tomatoes, diced
½ tsp fresh cilantro
4 tbsp cheese, grated
Red onions and jalapeno (optional)
1 tbsp lime juice
Salt, to taste
4 pcs of quesadilla wrap

1 Cut the chicken into ¼ inch strips.

2 Toss the salad leaves, tortilla strips, corn, and the mixed spices together with the dressing. Mix gently until the dressing evenly covers all the ingredients.

3 Dice and mix together the tomatoes, fresh cilantro, and red onions, jalapenos if using. Add the lime juice and salt.

4 Combine with the tortilla salad, serve the salad with the grilled chicken on top, and the wraps on the side.





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Sticky fingers

Wickedly indulgent, caramel is a surprisingly versatile, and popular ingredient. You can't go wrong with these treats!

Photographs SAM STOWELL

Bite-sized toffee apple doughnuts, recipe p62



Salted caramel &
macadamia pralines,
recipe p62





cream, mixing until combined. Strain through a sieve into a jug. Pour the custard into the tart shells, then bake for 18-22 mins until almost set (they should be quite wobbly in the centre but will firm up on cooling). Leave to cool completely, then chill for 30 mins.

4 Meanwhile, make the caramel topping. Grease a lipped metal baking tray with a little oil. Tip the caster sugar into a frying pan with 3 tbsp water and heat gently until the sugar starts to melt. Don't be tempted to stir the sugar, as this can encourage the caramel to crystallise. However, you can tilt the pan to move it around. Once the sugar is almost melted, turn up the heat and bubble the caramel to a deep golden-brown colour. Quickly tip onto the greased tray and leave to cool completely. Once cool, turn the tray upside down and tap to release the caramel. Break into pieces, then whizz in a food processor until you have fine crystals.

5 Heat the grill. Scatter a thick layer of caramel crystals over the surface of each tart, and pop a collar of foil around the top edge of the pastry. Place under the grill, not too near the heat source, and let the caramel melt - watch carefully as they will burn easily. Leave to cool, then chill for 30 mins or until ready to serve.

PER SERVING 947 kcs • protein 10g • carbs 71g • fat 69g • sat fat 40g • fibre 2g • sugar 41g • salt 0.6g >>

Crème brûlée tartlets

SERVES 4 **PREP** 20 mins, plus chilling **COOK** 1 hr

MORE OF A CHALLENGE

FOR THE PASTRY

175g plain flour

100g cold butter, cubed

2 tbsp caster sugar

Zest of 1/2 orange

1 egg yolk, beaten with

2 tbsp cold water

FOR THE FILLING

300ml carton double cream

1 vanilla pod, halved lengthways

3 egg yolks and 1 whole egg

2 tbsp caster sugar

FOR THE TOPPING

Sunflower oil, for greasing

85g caster sugar

1 Put the flour, a pinch of salt and the butter in a food processor and pulse until it resembles fine crumbs. Add the sugar and

orange zest, and briefly pulse again. Pour in 2 tbsp of the egg mixture and pulse until the dough comes together, adding more liquid if needed.

2 Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface and use to line four deep-fluted tartlet tins (8 x 3cm). Place the tins on a tray and chill for 30 mins. Heat oven to 190C/170C fan. Line each pastry case with baking parchment and fill with baking beans. Bake for 10-15 mins, until the sides are set. Remove the parchment and beans and cook for 5-10 mins. Leave to cool. *Can be made up to 1 day ahead at this stage and be stored in an airtight container.* Lower the oven to 150C/130C fan.

3 Pour the cream into a heavy-based saucepan, scrape in the seeds from the vanilla pod, then throw in the 2 halves of the pod. Heat until small bubbles begin to form around the sides of the pan, then leave to infuse for 5 mins. Remove the pod. In a bowl, beat together the egg yolks, whole egg and sugar. Keep stirring, then pour in the



The trick to a brûlée topping

If can be difficult to get the topping on a crème brûlée just right. Half burns before the other half has melted, or to get it even, you have to make it so thin that it's not really worth having.

The secret is to make a hard caramel first, then crush it up and scatter over the top (see recipe, left). This means the sugar is already golden brown and simply needs the merest heat to melt it back to one solid, evenly caramel-coloured sheet.

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Bite-sized toffee apple doughnuts

MAKES about 20 doughnuts **PREP** 40 mins plus 2 hrs 30 mins rising and proving **COOK** 35 mins

MORE OF A CHALLENGE ❄️

150ml milk
50g butter, cut into small pieces
400g plain flour
7g sachet fast-action yeast
50g caster sugar, plus 50g for dusting
½ tsp ground cinnamon, plus 1 tsp for dusting
1 large egg, beaten
1 apple, grated
Vegetable or sunflower oil for frying, plus extra for greasing
397g canned caramel

1 Warm the milk in a saucepan. Add the butter and set aside until the milk has cooled to hand temperature and the butter has melted. Put the flour in a large bowl with the yeast, sugar, cinnamon and ½ tsp salt, mix well. Make a well in the centre and pour in the warm milk mixture, egg and apple. Combine with a wooden spoon, then tip out onto a work surface and knead for a few mins to combine. Pop into a lightly oiled bowl, cover with oiled cling film and leave somewhere warm to rise until doubled in size – about 2 hrs.
2 Lightly grease 2 large baking trays. Uncover the dough and knock out all the air. Remove a lump of dough,

roughly the size of a walnut, and roll into a smooth ball. Put on a tray and squash gently with your palm. Repeat with the remaining dough – you should make about 20 doughnuts in total. Cover the trays with a sheet of oiled cling film and leave to prove until doubled in size again – about 30 mins.

3 Line a large plate or baking tray with kitchen paper, and mix the remaining sugar and cinnamon on another. Pour enough oil to come halfway up the sides of a large saucepan. If you have a thermometer the temperature should reach 180C. If you don't have one, drop in a small chunk of bread. The oil is ready when it browns in about 30 secs. Drop in 3-4 doughnuts at a time (depending on the size of your pan) and cook for 4-5 mins until each one is deep golden brown and puffed up. Drain on the kitchen paper, then quickly toss in the cinnamon sugar mixture. Repeat with the remaining doughnuts.

4 To fill the doughnuts, use a skewer or cocktail stick to make a hole in each one. Wiggle it around in the middle to create a cavity. Transfer the caramel to a piping bag fitted with small nozzle, insert the nozzle into the doughnut and squeeze as you pull it out, filling generously. Continue with the remaining doughnuts. Serve with extra caramel for dunking.

PER SERVING 183 kcals • protein 3g • carbs 26g • fat 7g • sat fat 2g • fibre 1g • sugar 12g • salt 0.2g

Deep frying know-how

If you don't have a deep fryer, use a deep, heavy-based saucepan with a lid. Make sure you always have the lid or a baking sheet large enough to cover the pan, so that you can pop it on if the oil starts to spit.

Add the oil to a cold pan. Only ever fill your pan halfway with oil as you will need space for the oil to bubble up when the food is added.

Don't mix hot fat with water-based liquids, as it will cause the fat to bubble up and spit ferociously. Make sure that you dry wet food on kitchen paper before frying. If the oil starts to smoke or catches fire, cover with the lid or baking sheet immediately. Never throw water on an oil-based fire.



Salted caramel & macadamia pralines

MAKES about 20 depending how large you drop them **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 20 mins

A LITTLE EFFORT **GLUTEN FREE** 🌱

300g macadamia nuts, lightly toasted in a pan or low oven
350g granulated white sugar
175g light brown sugar
125ml whole milk
85g butter
1 tsp vanilla extract

1 First lay a big sheet of baking parchment over your work surface for later. Now mix all the ingredients, with 1 tsp sea salt, in a large saucepan. Cook over a low heat, stirring occasionally, until the sugar has melted, then turn up the heat and bring to the boil.

2 When boiling, add a sugar thermometer and stir continuously until it reaches hard-ball stage, see right. Remove the pan from the heat, keep stirring for 30 secs then, working quickly using a wooden spoon,

drop spoonfuls of the mixture onto the parchment – they'll spread a little, so leave room as you dollop. The mixture will thicken fast, if you don't work quickly it'll get too thick to settle into flat pralines.

3 Scatter a few more salt flakes over each, then leave the pralines to cool and harden. *They'll keep in an airtight container for a few days. But they're at their best within 24 hrs of making.*

PER SERVING 245 kcals • protein 1g • carbs 27g • fat 15g • sat fat 4g • fibre 1g • sugar 26g • salt 0.4g



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Utterly nuttery caramel layer cake

SERVES 8 ● **PREP** 30 mins ● **COOK** 30 mins

A LITTLE EFFORT ❄️ without the topping

250g pack salted butter, softened, plus extra for greasing

175g mixed nuts (we used Brazil nuts, hazelnuts, pecans and almonds), roughly chopped

250g soft light brown sugar

3 tbsp golden syrup

4 large eggs

140g self-raising flour

75g ground almonds

½ tsp baking powder

1 tsp almond extract

3 tbsp milk

FOR THE FILLING

200ml double cream

5 tbsp caramel, from a can

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Line 2 x 20cm loose-bottomed Victoria sandwich cake tins with baking parchment, then grease one of the tins over the top of the parchment (this will help to prevent the caramel-nut topping from sticking when you turn it out). Tip the nuts into a frying pan and toast over a medium heat until golden. Add 50g of the butter, 50g sugar, the golden syrup and a good pinch of salt. Stir until the butter has melted, then bubble for 2 mins until the buttery sauce is golden brown – don't let it bubble for too long or the topping will set hard once cooled. Tip into the cake tin with the greased parchment and smooth over. Leave to cool while you make the cake.

2 Tip the remaining butter and sugar into a large bowl and beat with an electric whisk until pale and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well between each addition. Add the flour, almonds, baking powder, ½ tsp salt, almond extract and milk,

and mix again until just combined. Divide the cake mixture between the tins and smooth over the surface. Bake for 25 mins, or until a skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tins for 10 mins, then flip out onto a wire rack and remove the parchment. Allow to cool completely.

3 Whisk the cream and 2 tbsp of the caramel until softly whipped and just holding its shape. To assemble the cake, place the plain cake on a plate or stand. Top with the whipped cream, swirling it out towards the edges. Drizzle over the remaining caramel (give it a good mix first to loosen it), letting it dribble down the sides. Top with the remaining sponge, nutty-side up. Serve within 1 day, or store in fridge for 3 days, removing it from the fridge 10 mins before serving.

PER SERVING 531 kcs • protein 9g • carbs 36g

• fat 39g • sat fat 19g • fibre 1g • sugar 27g • salt

0.9g 



**Showstopper for
afternoon tea**

BE YOUR OWN BARISTA!

Breville's newest coffee machine, The Oracle, is designed to take your coffee-making experience to the next level.

The Oracle

Breville's latest gadget, the Oracle Coffee Machine, can be hailed as the Ferrari of domestic coffee machines, offering café-style long blacks, and flat whites, among other creations. Billed as the world's first automatic manual coffee machine, this robust stainless steel semi-automatic gadget can provide the results of handmade coffee, at the touch of a few buttons.



Using it isn't as complicated or technical as it may look, all you need is a batch of freshly roasted coffee beans, milk and water. The Oracle's automatic dosing and tamping feature (which makes pressed coffee powder after grinding the coffee) is what makes it enticing, as you no longer have to stress over manually putting the accurate measurement of ground coffee into the puck (the handheld accessory). Place the puck into the tamper, to get a dose of ground coffee, and adjust the little knob setting on the side to choose how fine or coarse you want it. The coffee-filled puck then needs to be placed into the group spout to secure it before making your coffee. Your preferred cup is ready within just 90 seconds, after which you can top it off with smooth frothy milk, which can be simultaneously steamed and frothed on the side. The automatic frother controls the temperature of the milk, but you can also adjust the temperature on the screen of the machine, to make it piping hot. The ideal temperature is between 50-65C, and the user-friendly machine recommends the amount of froth you require for a cappuccino or latte as well. The Oracle also saves the coffee preference of the last person who uses it! Water can be added to the machine either in the tank at the back, or in front – it holds about 1 litre of water – and cleaning the machine isn't complicated either, as you just need to put a tablet into it and follow the instructions on the screen. To be honest, we were sold when we found out Heston Blumenthal uses it – he's the brand ambassador – but after testing it out, we love that we can now consider ourselves baristas, and enjoy the perfect cup as and when we like. It does cost a pretty penny, but for any coffee lover, it will be a lifetime investment.

Useful info: The Oracle is priced at Dhs9,999, and is available at Dubai Garden Centre, Lakeland, and from breville.ae.

TRY THIS

Not just good for a hot drink, you can get more out of your coffee machine with this delicious coffee-based dessert.

Mocha mousse cake

SERVES 12 | PREP 30 MINS |
COOK 5 MINS PLUS 8 HRS
REFRIGERATION

350g dark chocolate, chopped
130g butter, chopped
1 tbsp honey
200g digestive biscuits
4 eggs, separated, at room temperature
300ml thickened cream
30ml strong espresso coffee, chilled
Cocoa powder, to dust
Chocolate curls, to serve



- 1 Line the base and sides of a 22cm (base measurement) springform pan with baking paper.
- 2 Place 50g of the chocolate, 100g butter and honey in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan half filled with simmering water (making sure the bowl doesn't touch the water). Stir with a metal spoon until melted and smooth. Remove from heat.
- 3 Place biscuits into a food processor or blender and process until finely crushed. Add to the chocolate mixture and stir to combine. Spread over the base of prepared pan. Refrigerate for 30 mins to set.
- 4 Meanwhile place remaining dark chocolate and butter in a large heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water (making sure the bowl doesn't touch the water). Stir with a metal spoon until melted and smooth. Remove bowl and set aside for 5 mins to cool slightly. Stir in egg yolks until combined.
- 5 Add egg whites to a mixer bowl. Slowly beat egg whites until firm peaks form.
- 6 Place cream and coffee into a small bowl, and beat for 1-2 mins or until just thickened and very soft peaks form. Add half the cream mixture to the chocolate and stir until combined. Gently fold through remaining cream mixture until mixed thoroughly. Fold in half the egg whites, mix and repeat with remaining egg whites. Spoon mixture over the biscuit base, and smooth surface. Cover with plastic food wrap. Refrigerate for at least 8 hrs or overnight, until set.
- 7 Just before serving, release the cake from the springform pan and peel away baking paper. Place on a serving plate. Dust with cocoa powder and top with choc curls.

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Thought for food

Gourmet Lifestyle

Travel, global cuisines, health, interviews, kitchens and more



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Trendy toppings

Nicola Monteath speaks to nutrition experts to learn about the newest superfoods we should be adding to our diet.

Nutritional yeast

Nutritional yeast is a deactivated yeast cultured on sugarcane and molasses. “The finished product is heated, which kills the culture, but the nutrients are preserved throughout the process. The yeast has protein, fibre, selenium, zinc, and vitamin,” says Christopher Clark, Dubai-based nutrition expert, chef, and author of *Nutritional Grail* (Extropy Publishing). The yeast is popular with vegans and vegetarians because it’s often fortified with vitamin B12, otherwise available in meat, fish and poultry. Christopher says that it has a nutty, cheese-like taste, lending itself well to pesto and faux cheese sauces. He also recommends sprinkling it on top of mashed potatoes, pasta, and salads. Laura Holland, nutritionist and co-founder of beutifulbody.com (a website dedicated to health and wellness) also highly recommends this superfood. “It is extremely good for the central nervous system and digestion, but it’s not something you can eat on its own – the taste is not what you’re eating this for. It has to be blended into a smoothie or juice,” she says.

Bee pollen

This sweet superfood is the pollen of a number of flowers, collected by bees and treasured by herbalists and holistic health practitioners for its unique array of micronutrients. It is rich in vitamins and minerals, and protein, acting as a nourishing superfood, and providing strength and health benefits to the whole body in a very holistic way,” says Laura. Christopher agrees with this and says it has high amounts of rutin, an antioxidant that also has anti-inflammatory properties. The energy-boosting pollen supports the immune system, and can be eaten sprinkled over freshly cut fruit, topped over chia seed puddings, porridge, and smoothies. You can even eat a teaspoon of it as a snack, for a quick pick-me-up.

Chia seeds

Already quite popular with foodies in the know, the tiny seeds, taken from the plant *Salvia Hispanica* – related to the mint family – are packed with Omega-3 fatty acids, fibre, vitamins and minerals that have a great impact on the body. “The seeds have anti-inflammatory benefits, protect against the heart, keep the brain healthy, and support the central nervous system,” says Laura. Sprinkle the flavourless seeds on top of salads, puddings, and stir-frys to add texture, or make an easy, healthy pudding by mixing it with milk and refrigerating the mixture overnight.

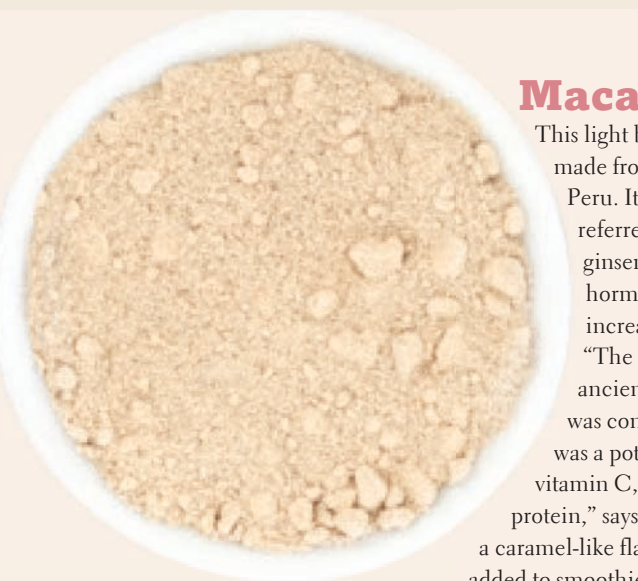


Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK



Raw cacao nibs

The scientific name of cacao is theobroma, which translates into food of the gods. “Cacao is usually paired with sugar, which makes it not such a healthy choice. This problem is solved with raw cacao chunks or nibs,” says Christopher. With a bitter, slightly chocolate-y taste and crunchy texture, cacao offers heart-healthy fat, magnesium, flavonols, and antioxidants. Laura highly recommends cacao nibs as they are rich in magnesium and iron, which are both vital for women’s hormonal health. The nibs also provide energy, help balance sugar levels in the body, and aid with weight loss. Eat it cut into slivers with Greek yoghurt, porridge, or fresh fruit.



Maca


This light brown powder made from a root is native to Peru. It is sometimes referred to as Peruvian ginseng, and balances hormones, while increasing fertility too. “The root harks back to ancient Incan times, and was consumed because it was a potent source of vitamin C, potassium, and protein,” says Christopher. With a caramel-like flavour, maca can be added to smoothies or sprinkled over fruit, yogurt, or cereal.

Matcha powder

Green tea is one of nature’s most powerful antioxidants, but steeping green tea leaves in hot water only extracts a fraction of the plant’s full potency. Matcha comes from green tea leaves, which are ground into a fine powder. The powder has chlorophyll and amino acids which lends it a rich, bitter taste, followed by a slight sweetness – it is an acquired taste. “One teaspoon of matcha is roughly equivalent to drinking ten cups of green tea, with respect to antioxidants,” says Christopher. It is a versatile superfood, and can be eaten with yoghurt, mashed into guacamole, stirred into salad dressing, and mixed into smoothies.



Maqui powder

The antioxidant-rich dark purple powder – from ground maqui berries – hails from South America. “It helps aid weight loss, repairs cells, detoxifies the system, and clears the skin, thanks to the wealth of minerals and vitamins it contains, including Vitamin C, calcium, iron and potassium,” says Laura. The powder has a fruity flavour, so add it to juices, smoothies, and desserts, or blend it with cocoa powder, and sprinkle it on top of your favourite cereal. 



Be a pasta master!

Which sauce goes best with tagliatelle? Is fresh always better than dried? Cassie Best has all the answers to your pasta related questions.
Photographs ADRIAN TAYLOR

Every one of Italy's 20 regions has a distinctive cuisine – partly shaped by climate and terrain, partly due to history. You'll find truffles and creamy Gorgonzola in the mountainous northern region of Piedmont; cured meat and flavourful tomatoes in the fertile central region of Umbria; and artichokes and seafood in Sicily, at Italy's southern tip.

These ingredients are often used in sauces, and paired with pasta shapes specifically designed to hold the sauce in the best way possible. For this reason, many regions have created their own pasta shapes – although their origin is often hotly disputed among Italians! Here's some useful know-how on the best known pasta types.

VENETO **Bigoli**, thick noodle-like spaghetti, often made from wholewheat flour, butter and duck eggs.



EMILIA ROMAGNA **Strozzapreti** or 'priest strangler' – inspired by the legend that greedy priests would eat the strozzapreti, given to them by locals, so quickly that they might choke on it.

LIGURIA **Trofie** traditionally served the Genovese way with pesto, green beans and potatoes.



ABRUZZO **Chitarra**, meaning 'guitar', is a long thin pasta which is cut using a harp-like tool. The fresh pasta dough is pushed through the fine strings to cut it into strands.

CAMPANIA **Penne** meaning 'pen' or 'quill' – cut on an angle to resemble its namesake. Ideal for holding rich tomato or meat sauces, or in pasta bakes.



TUSCANY **Gigli** meaning 'lilies' is specifically from Florence, where the lily is the local emblem.



PUGLIA **Orecchiette** or 'little ears' are traditionally served with broccoli rabe, anchovies, chilli and garlic.

Cooking tips

- Always cook pasta in a very large pan of salted, boiling water. If you don't give the pasta enough space to move in the pan, it will stick together. Italians say the water should be as salty as the sea to flavour the pasta.
- There is no need to add olive oil to your pasta. It won't prevent it from sticking together, and will just end up down the drain.
- The popular version of spag bol usually consists of cooked spaghetti topped with saucy mince, but in Italy, the pasta and sauce are always combined in the pan to ensure every piece of pasta is coated.
- Don't cook the pasta all the way through in the water. Instead, drain it when it still has a little bite, then add to the sauce and continue cooking for a few minutes more until the pasta is cooked and has absorbed a little of the sauce.
- When draining the pasta, make sure you save a cup of the pasta water. Then, when you add the pasta to the sauce, splash in a little of the water if it looks too dry. The starch in the water will help the sauce cling to the pasta.

What's on the label?

Dried or fresh? Fresh pasta is best when it is homemade (or bought on the day it is made). The supermarket 'fresh' pastas generally lack texture, and often break up when tossed through a sauce – and they're usually double the price of the dried variety. Dried pasta has a more robust texture, giving it a good bite – it will also last for months.

Egg pasta Egg yolks are added to enrich the pasta dough. This gives it a richer flavour and colour. Fresh pasta is often made with egg yolk, whereas the dried variety usually just contains water.

Bronze die cut A process used to cut the pasta. The dough is pushed through cutters (called dies) made of bronze, instead of the more common Teflon. This creates a rougher, more porous surface, allowing the sauce to cling to it.

Durum wheat flour Most of the pasta produced in Italy is made from durum wheat. Durum is a tough grain, providing durum wheat pasta with its distinctive bite. It is a golden coloured grain, giving the pasta a lovely yellow hue.

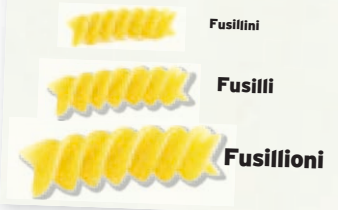
'Rigate' With ridges, this gives the sauce something to cling to. It is often found on tubular shapes, such as rigatoni or penne.



Did you know?

Pasta ending in 'ini' = smaller version of a particular shape.

Pasta ending in 'oni' = larger version of a particular shape.



Perfect pairings: match the shape to the sauce

Pasta shape	Such as	Serve with
Long and skinny	Spaghetti, linguine, fusilli lunghi, vermicelli	Light seafood sauces, cream- or oil-based sauces.
Long ribbons	Tagliatelle, pappardelle, fettuccine, mafaldine	Rich meaty sauces.
Shells	Conchiglie, lumache	Heavy cream or meat sauces; large ones can be stuffed.
Twists	Fusilli, trofie, strozzapreti, caserecce, gemelli	Lighter, smoother sauces which will cling to the twists, such as pesto.
Tubes	Penne, rigatoni, macaroni, paccheri	Hearty vegetable sauces, or baked cheese dishes. Also good with Bolognese or ragu.
Mini shapes	Orzo, fregola, canestrini, stelline	In soups and stews or as pasta salads.
Filled pasta	Ravioli, tortellini, cappelletti	As the filling contains lots of flavour, these are traditionally served with a light butter or oil sauce. 🍴



A FAREWELL TO ARMS — and hello, kitchen!

Sophie McCarrick catches up with Lebanese culinary superstar Joe Barza to find out about his extraordinary journey from being a military man to a celebrity chef taking Lebanese cuisine to the world.

Notably raising the bar for gourmet Lebanese cuisine internationally, chef Joe Barza is not only a global ambassador and innovator, but a seasoned traveller and television personality too, whose culinary journey did not begin in the most conventional of ways.

Formerly working as a bodyguard for the president of Lebanon during the Lebanese civil war, after a dramatic event when the president was assassinated, which left him rudderless for a while, Joe found his safe haven in the kitchen, where he discovered his true calling as a chef. Having trained with internationally renowned chefs, including Marc Veyrat, Jean-Pierre Jacob, Pierre Marin and Ciccio Sultano since then, Joe has accumulated more than 22 years of professional cooking and kitchen management experience. He also starred as the head judge and co-host on the

Photographs SUPPLIED

Emmy Award winning television show, Top Chef Middle East, for two consecutive years. Now working as a culinary consultant with restaurants and brands across the region, Joe has developed a well-established reputation for taking traditional, home-style cooking and transforming it into dazzling, modern Lebanese dishes.

As Joe reflects on his experiences, he opines it's time for the culinary world to get back to its roots – back to the methods of its ancestors and the land's finest. Ever charismatic, genuinely friendly and humble, Joe opens our conversation with a smile: "Let me tell you my story, and why now, it's time for us all to get back to basics in the kitchen."

At what age did you realise being a chef was your calling?

My family were fishermen who spent their days talking about food, which ignited a passion in me, growing up. I didn't think about becoming a chef, however, until I started to cook properly at 24. I think my talent really kicked in when I turned 39, that's when I found my flow.

Do you think growing up in Lebanon shaped your cooking habits?

Absolutely. Having now worked in this industry for 20 years, I can look back and really appreciate how much Lebanon's heritage shaped my direction in the kitchen. I'm very proud of my country.

You've revolutionised Lebanese cuisine in a way. What were people's initial reactions to your contemporary ways?

Honestly, people accepted it. My food really isn't too far from traditional Lebanese. I like to view my work as polishing a diamond, I believe that people view my food as simply an upgraded version of what's already out there. They like the twist and are very accepting of it.

What made you want to modernise Lebanese cuisine?

I was inspired in France, by a lady making foie gras in a unique way. This made me question my culinary direction and ask myself – why does hummous always have to be mixed with tahini? Why do we always play it safe in Lebanese kitchens? I aspired to become an innovator.

And so you did. But how did you make such a success of it?

I stick to the basics. I respect the produce and I respect Lebanese recipes. Most Lebanese dishes were not created by professional chefs, they were

invented by housewives. So, I simply refine their home-style methods, and take existing products to the next level of sophistication. Fantastic home cooking, with an elegant twist – that's how I describe my culinary style.

You moved to South Africa after culinary school – what was that experience like?

South Africa taught me how to think, to stretch

“I want to help educate people on the importance of knowing where they source their food from.”

my creative wings and develop as a chef. Learning in a kitchen with 14 different nationalities, one day I asked my teacher, “Is it acceptable to put chicken and beef together?” He told me to look up at the sky, and said, “Joe, the sky is your limit.” Since that lesson, I've really grown as a chef.

Unlike most chefs, you chose to open a consulting company rather than a restaurant by your name. Why?

I had come to a crossroads in my life, where I knew it was time for me to start a business. There was no particular reason, I just noticed a gap in the market for a consulting company as opposed to opening a restaurant. And so, I began catering to that demand. I also want to help educate people on the importance of knowing where they source their food from.

For most people, a culinary consultant is a person who devises a menu. Tell us, what else does your job entail?

It's not easy, you really have to sit down and listen to your client. It's not as straightforward and flexible as some may think. I only take on long-term projects for a minimum of one year. It would be very easy for me to consult, provide some recipes and then leave. But, this is not a long-term solution, and I must make sure my consulting is effective and withstands the test of time.

You're not only a consultant but also a notable TV personality. What was your experience with Top Chef like?

The experience opened my eyes to how much the Middle East's culinary industry has matured. Not long ago in this region, the role of a chef was not a respected position in our restaurants and households. But now, it's changed. It blew my mind to see how many people tuned in to watch the show. Any part I can play in helping people understand that chefs are skilled people, is a worthy one for me.

What's next in the pipeline for you?

More work at Bioland – a farm I'm a partner and executive chef at in Lebanon. We produce organic food, and have a restaurant that allows me to really get back to basics. I want to start placing more emphasis on promoting the healthy food our grandparents used to eat, before the generations of today ruined it with processed, chemical-infused food. My future is about going

back to the roots and cooking from the earth, it's so important that we all start trying to do the same. Not only for better tasting food, but more crucially, for our own health.

So, say it's 2035. What do you think you'll be doing?

Cooking at the farm. Teaching mothers how to cook for their children, because this is where good, quality cooking begins, at home with the children. I predict by then, many societies throughout the world would have resorted back to the older methods of cooking, and will be living properly off the land once more. I feel sometimes the industry has lost its way, over-complicating things, and has forgotten how special food is when we stick to the basics. It's the art of simplicity that works, and keeps us healthy. >>

Quick Qs with Joe

Your top three countries in the world for food?

Apart from Lebanon, Italy, Spain and France.

Your ideal dish?

Fish, raw fish. Nothing beats a piece of freshly caught fish.

You are married with two children – do you cook at home?

Absolutely, all of the time.

Who is your dream chef to work with?

I'd cook with my mother again, if she were still alive. She would be my dream chef to work with.

The best piece of advice you'd give to young chefs?

You must cook from your heart. Passion, passion, and more passion – that's it! As long as you're passionate, you're on the right track!

SIGNATURE RECIPES



Mouhamara with pistachio crust

SERVES 6 PREP 15 mins NO COOK **EASY**

500g breadcrumbs
150g walnuts
50g pistachio
2 cloves of garlic
110g rib al har (hot pepper paste)
2g white pepper
3g cumin powder
200ml olive oil
170g tomato paste
10g salt

A dash of coriander powder

4 ice cubes

FOR THE SAUCE

5g tomatoes, cut into cubes

5g cucumber, cut finely

5g onions, finely chopped

Olive oil

FOR GARNISH

A large handful of pistachios, chopped

1 spring onion

2 sprigs of mint leaves

A drizzle of pomegranate molasses

1 tbsp minted labneh

1 Mix all the Mouhamara ingredients well, except for the sauce, in a blender until it becomes a paste.

2 Combine all the ingredients for the sauce.

3 Roll the Mouhamara into balls of about 80g each. Roll it in some pistachio to coat, then slice into rounds.

4 To serve, place the Mouhamara pieces on top of the minted labneh on a plate, drizzle some pomegranate molasses and olive oil over, and garnish with the spring onion. 🍴

Fish tajin with eggplant

SERVES 4 PREP 30 mins COOK 35mins **EASY**

1 eggplant (about 300g), cut into 4 pieces

Salt, to taste

150g small onion rings

2g saffron

2 pieces of cucumber pickles, cut into cubes

Pepper, to taste

500g seabass, cut into cubes

40ml corn oil

Zest of a lemon

1 tomato, cut into rounds

1 tsp rib al har (hot pepper paste)

A drizzle of pomegranate molasses

Chives, for garnish

1.5 pieces of avocado mashed and mixed with 1 spoon of laban

FOR THE TAJIN MIX

100g laban (yoghurt cheese)

75ml water

100g tahini

1 Sprinkle some salt on the eggplant and set aside for about 10 mins, then rinse and dry well.

2 In a separate bowl, mix the laban with the tahini, hot pepper paste, and water – it shouldn't be thick, add more water if needed. Set aside.

3 In a pot, heat the oil then sauté the onions. Add the saffron and mix with a wooden spoon until it is translucent, then add the pickles and a pinch of salt. Lower heat and add the tahini mixture to the pot and stir it well with a wooden spoon for about 10 mins.

4 Heat some oil in a pan, then add the fish, and the zest the lemon on top, cook for 5 mins. Then, add in the Tajin mix and keep cooking the fish on both sides for another 10 mins.

5 In another pan, sauté the eggplant as well as the tomato slices for about 5 min. Add salt and pepper to taste.

6 To serve, place a piece of eggplant, top it with a tomato, and a spoon of the fish with tajin mix.

Drizzle the pomegranate molasses over it, garnish with some chives and a spoonful of the the avocado mix.

“Mamma Mia!”

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A true Italian

Salvatore Barcellona, the new Italian chef at Prego's, Media Rotana hotel, is bringing the best of regional cuisine to the city. We catch up with him to find out more.

Born in Sicily, Salvatore Barcellona, grew up in the country with one of the richest food cultures in the world, Italy. Having developed a passion for cooking from a young age, which stemmed from his admiration for his mother's skills – a chef herself – the budding chef left Italy when he was 19, to travel the world to the US, Germany, and UK to further enrich his culinary experience. In a candid conversation with him, we learned about the makings of this very lively chef now at the helm of Prego's restaurant, whose authenticity comes through as much in his limited English language skills, as in his passion for Italian food and culture.

Tell us a little bit about your journey to get here?

I was born in Palermo, Italy. I became interested in cooking when I was 14 years old, and pursued a culinary education upon realising my passion for food. After working in a number of restaurants in my hometown, when I turned 19, I went to the US. My cousin had his own pizza restaurant there, so naturally it was one of the first dishes I perfected. I have also worked in Germany, Bristol, London and Leicester since. I returned to Italy, to work with various resorts and restaurants there, including the Hotel Ipomea Club. In 2011 I moved to the UAE to work with the Filini Bar & Restaurant at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Abu Dhabi and joined Prego's earlier this year.

Who is your greatest culinary inspiration so far, and why?

My mother is my greatest inspiration and mentor. She is also a chef and has taught me a lot growing up. When I was younger, I used to watch her cooking our meals, she was always very passionate. She sparked my passion for cooking.

What is your culinary philosophy?

I always cook with fresh produce. I see to it that I select and use the best ingredients. Also, this is what Italian cuisine is all about - using the

freshest produce available. That is the secret for creating the perfect Italian dish.

What changes will you be making at Prego's?

I'm going to introduce a few Sicilian dishes to the menu, and we will soon be doing a regional menu promotion too. For this promotion, we will introduce different dishes from various regions of Italy ever week. It will be like a gastronomic tour of the country. For example, one week our menu will comprise of specialty dishes from Lombardy, and then Campania and so on. This is very exciting for us, because we will have the opportunity to serve diners authentic Italian dishes.

Could you please name a few of the dishes that will be part of your new menu?

The sarde beccafico (sardines stuffed with bread and a blend of orange, lemon, pine nuts, mint and basil, served with baked potato and saffron) is one dish. As for pastas, we will serve the pasta con le sarde, a well-known specialty from Sicily.

Will you be using local produce in dishes?

Yes of course, I believe that the key to making a perfect dish is through choosing the best ingredients and this is what we do at Prego's. We get our tomatoes, herbs and vegetables from farms in Al Ain.

Is there any particular dish on the menu that you would highly recommend?

I specialise in seafood, because I came from Palermo, which is an area near the sea. So I would highly recommend the gnocchi with crab meat, seafood risotto and truffles, and the delightful tagliolini with lobster. I also love to customise special dishes on request. I recently made Ossobuco with risotto alla Milanese for a few guests.

Anything else you would like to introduce to the restaurant?

Cheese is a big thing in Italy, and I am hoping to bring in a wider selection of cheese here at Prego's. Also, the olives from my country are just wonderful, and I would love to bring those here too.

Finally, can you tell us what is your recipe for success?

I believe that creativity, passion and hard work is the ultimate recipe for success.

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Get your caffeine fix

As any coffee lover will tell you, coffee is so much more than a drink – it's a way of life! Here are some stylish ideas for glamping up your coffee corner, and a tempting new way to enjoy the beverage, on the turn page.

Coffee creations

Master the art of making frothy cappuccinos and latte macchiatos with the Nespresso Latissima Touch, which allows you to make your favourite drink at the touch of a button. Dhs1,850 at Nespresso boutiques and buynespresso.com.



Chic cup

Sipping coffee never looked so good! We love this Royal Albert mug, which adds a bit of sophistication to the drink. Dhs55 at Bloomingdale's Home.



A coffee classic

The vibrant Moccamaster coffee machine is the ultimate gadget for your kitchen countertop. A traditional filter coffee maker, it features a hotplate to keep the coffee warm for about two hours. Dhs1,299 at Coffeeplanet.com



Flavoured confections

We bet you won't be able to resist finishing this Artisan Chocolate Coffee Collection box in one go! Each gourmet creation has a coffee-flavoured filling that complements the chocolate perfectly. Dhs5 per chocolate at Cocosia.



Storage solution

These Tom, Dick and Harry storage jars are perfect for those who want to stash away freshly ground coffee, within arm's reach. Dhs269 at wamli.com.



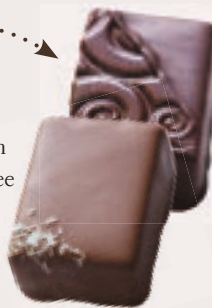
Perfect brew

The OXO Good Grips French Press, is ideal for those who make coffee in large batches every morning, as it holds up to 1 litre (8 cups) of coffee. Dhs269 at Lakeland.



Global notes

We adore chocolate as it is, but love it even more when it is made from premium coffee beans, and has ganache in it. Try the Kenyan Dark chocolate, and Arabic coffee milk chocolate for an interesting combination. Dhs6.25 per piece, at Forrey and Galland.



French delight

Can anyone say no to an éclair? Bite into this one filled with coffee cream, and sate your sugar and caffeine cravings in one go. From Dhs8.5 at Eclair boutique. >>



The right shot

Add instant glam to your morning espresso with this elegant Shiyen espresso c-s blue cup and saucer. Dhs69 at The One.



Espresso extravagance

Making espresso shots on your stovetop doesn't get any easier. Place the water and ground coffee in the Bialetti Fiammette Espresso maker, heat it up, and allow the crema to form before pouring out the perfect cup. Dhs298 at Eataly.



Try this
delicious coffee
flavoured treat

Cappuccino cake

CUTS INTO 12 slices PREP 15 mins COOK 25-30 mins

EASY  sponge only

250g pack butter, softened
250g light soft brown sugar plus 2-3 tbsp
300g self-raising flour
4 eggs, beaten

50g walnuts, toasted and finely chopped (a food processor is easiest), optional
200ml very strong coffee (made fresh or with instant), cooled

FOR THE FROSTING

500g tub mascarpone
2 tbsp light soft brown sugar
Cocoa powder or drinking chocolate, to decorate

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Butter 2 x 20cm sandwich tins and line the bases with greaseproof paper. Beat butter and sugar with an electric hand whisk until pale and creamy. Add flour and eggs in one go; beat until evenly mixed. Fold in the walnuts (if using) and half the coffee. Spoon into the tins.

Bake for 25-30 mins, until golden and risen.

2 Leave in the tins for 5 mins, then turn out onto a wire rack. Sweeten remaining coffee with the extra sugar and sprinkle 4 tbsp over the sponges. Cool completely.

3 While the cakes cool, make the frosting. Tip the mascarpone into a large bowl and beat in the sugar and remaining coffee until smooth and creamy. Use about half of the frosting to sandwich the sponges together then, using a palette or cutlery knife, spread the rest of the frosting over the top of the cake. Dust with cocoa powder or drinking chocolate. Will keep covered in the fridge for 2-3 days.

PER SERVING energy 559 kJ • fat 5g • saturates 23g • carbs 48g • sugars 29g • fibre 1g • protein 5g • salt 0.72g





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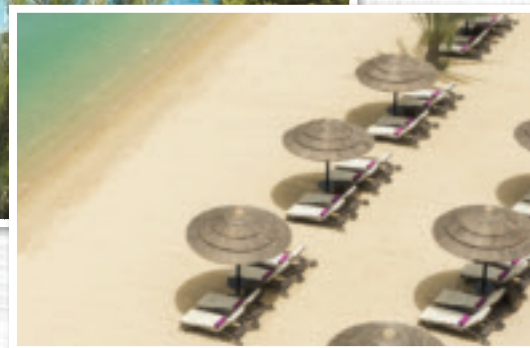
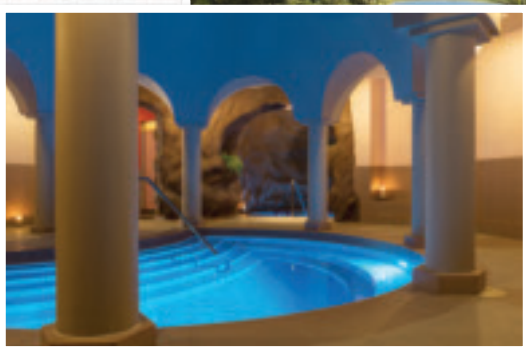
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Competition



**Get a chance to win a two-night stay in a suite,
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Le Meridien Hotel Abu Dhabi has been a firm favourite in the capital for years now. The centrally located city resort is close to top shopping destinations, and historical spots, and makes for a great beach escape within the city. Apart from the private beach and spa, you can use the hotel's wide range of facilities on offer, or perhaps take a stroll through the lush gardens. The gourmet offerings here feature their new all-day dining restaurant, The Latest Recipe, Acropolis (a Greek tavern serving authentic specialties), La Brasserie for international, Pappagallo for Italian, and Talay for Thai cuisine.

One winner can get a two-night stay in a Presidential suite, inclusive of breakfast and dinner at La Brasserie, as well as complimentary access to Eden Spa facilities.

Scan this QR
code to go
straight to
our website.

Log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com

to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

What is the name of the Italian restaurant at Le Meridien Hotel Abu Dhabi?



*Terms & conditions apply. Flights are not included in this prize. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

Asadito Barbecue



Palermo Restaurant is lighting up its grill for a sumptuous barbecue feast every Thursday. Prepare to enjoy a mouthwatering spread of Argentinean meat cuts while enjoying the glorious views of our polo fields.

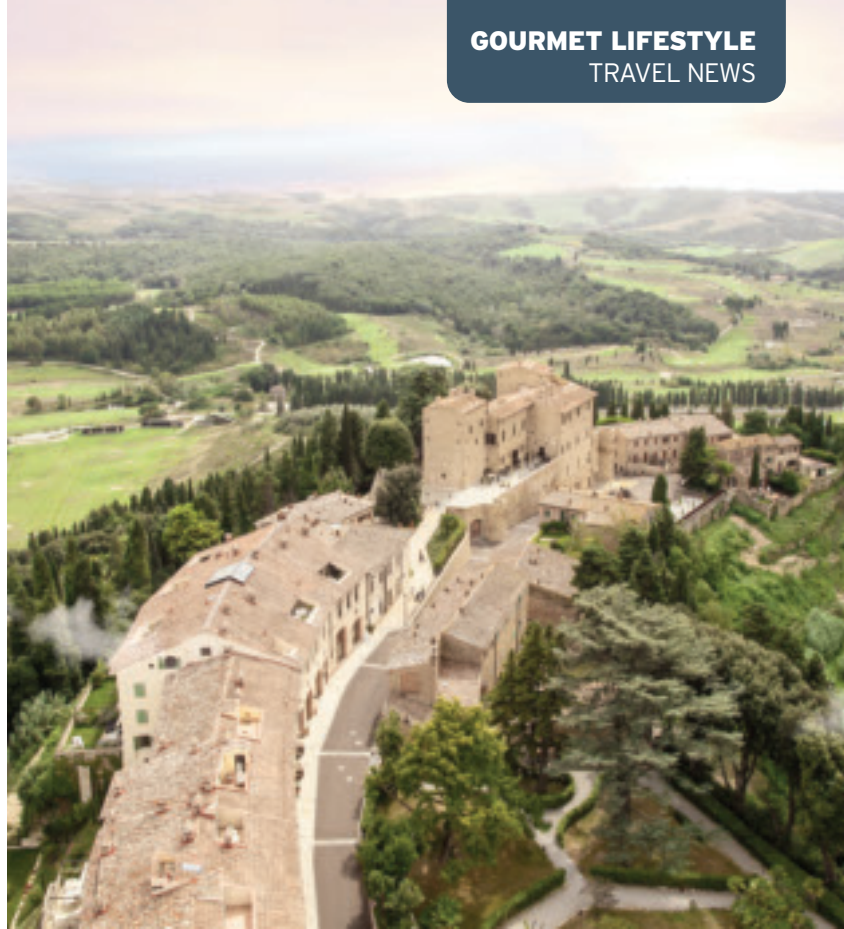
Every Thursday, 7:00 pm to 10:30 pm
AED 240 per person including a glass of grape or hops beverage

Taste of the world

All the foodie news from around the globe.

Italian inspiration

Planning a trip to Italy? The Toscana Resort Castelfalfi, an estate set amidst its own herb gardens, olive groves and vineyards, with a castle dating back to the middle ages, that has opened its doors after a massive restoration project, is the sort of destination no foodie should miss! The Trattoria Il Rosmarino restaurant, headed up by a young Michelin-starred chef, serves up fresh, field-to-table cuisine from surrounding farms and forests – think wild boar ragù and homemade pastas – in a classical Tuscan setting. There's also a cookery school on-site where you can perfect your skills with the star chef. We're getting itchy feet just thinking about this place... find out more from castelfalfi.co.uk.



Gourmet shopping

The latest culinary retail destination to head to in Europe is the El Corte Ingles' Serrano 52 store in Madrid, which has recently opened the doors to its Gourmet Experience section. 800 square feet worth of epicurean delights – from unique restaurants and street food-style offerings, to premium products and a dedicated sweet section piled with artisanal ice cream, and handmade pastries – what's not to love?! www.elcorteingles.es.



Resort revamp

A family getaway in Thailand just got a whole lot more tempting with the recent introduction of brand new restaurants and new rooms and suites at the Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket. The culinary offerings include El Gaucho, a Brazilian churrasco, The Mint, offering sharing-style dishes, and Orient Asia, which serves regional specialities. Room rates start from US\$120 per night (Dhs440), visit moevenpick-hotels.com.

A WEEKEND IN TOKYO

Make the most of Japan's incomparable cherry blossom season with the new Wanderlust Weekend package at the luxe Palace Hotel Tokyo. Themed around the concept of Wa (harmony in Japanese), the package focuses on water, wine and washoku with three unique experiences clubbed into one wonderful weekend! Washoku involves a kaiseki lunch for two at Wadakura restaurant, Water refers to a revitalising spa treatment at Japan's only Evian spa, while Wine can be enjoyed at a gourmet dinner in the Michelin-star French restaurant Crown. Offering a carefully balanced mix of experiences, the package, including two nights' stay is priced at JPY 102,500 (around Dhs3,145). Visit en.palacehoteltokyo.com for more.



Gourmet

Origin – France, early 19th century

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Discovering the culinary secrets of *Hoi An*

Andrea Anastasiou goes exploring in Vietnam's culinary capital.

As I'm busy chomping on cao lau, an odd medley of chewy, thick brown noodles, thin slices of pork, crunchy croutons, crisp greens, beansprouts and a caramelised broth, I get the feeling that all my senses have been awakened. It's one of those dishes that has that sort of an effect – the crunchiness of the croutons vibrates in my head, the aromatic broth teases my nose, while my tongue is delighting in each mouthful. Collectively, these ingredients work in a beautiful symphony, and with every bite my stomach begs for more.

Cao lau is just one of the many dishes that have made my tastebuds sing, which I've sampled with 12

other food lovers on a food tour through Hoi An – a coastal town in central Vietnam. Over the last few hours we've walked through the streets, trying various delicacies at the many food stalls that pepper the pavements. As I chow down on the last of the noodles, resisting the urge to lick clean the small ceramic bowl, I ask Neville, our guide, what the secret is to these highly delectable Hoi An dishes.

"It's khéo tay," he replies. "A Vietnamese expression that means dexterity, and is better described as loving care."

I'm discouraged by Neville's revelation, which to me loosely translates as you need a certain magic touch – one that comes from years of practising in

the kitchen with your mum and grandma – to get Hoi An dishes right. I love this town's food and the thought of not having the ability to recreate any of it back home is disappointing.

Culinary heritage

Located a one-hour flight away from Ho Chi Minh City, Hoi An has an enchanting appeal. It's not just the food and secret recipes that drew me back here for the second time in a year; it's also its distinct vibe. Despite now being firmly on the country's increasingly popular tourist trail, Hoi An manages to retain a certain charm. A major trading port between the 15th and 18th centuries, >>



Hoi An by dusk



Children frolic by the river



Cao lau noodle making



Hoi An's Old Town is a UNESCO heritage site

the town reflects a fusion of the cultures that passed through over the years, including Chinese, Japanese and European. When other ports in Vietnam began to rise in popularity and Hoi An's harbour silted up, the town's fame waned and it seemed to have frozen in time ever since. Now what remains are its characteristically mustard-yellow buildings, numerous Chinese temples and a wooden Japanese bridge, all of which make up Hoi An's ancient town – a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The sight of hundreds of colourful Chinese lanterns reflecting off the ink-black Thu Bon River at night and the bursts of pink bougainvillea crawling up many of the buildings are two enduring images that I have of the town. When you've visited Vietnam's larger cities, Hoi An comes as a welcome respite; the old town is mostly pedestrianised, meaning you can stroll around at your leisure without worrying about a motorbike running you down.

And while Vietnamese cuisine is certainly having a moment around the world, and you get great food all over the country, I can, having travelled extensively around the country, safely say that Hoi An has the best food in Vietnam. I've feasted on pho bo (beef noodle soup) in Ho Chi Minh City, bánh bèo (steamed rice cakes topped with shrimp and crispy fried shallots) in Hue and cha ca la vong (fish cooked with turmeric and dill) in Hanoi. I've dined in local establishments, makeshift roadside shacks and in high-end restaurants. And yet despite all of these experiences, my taste buds are always most nostalgic for the wonderful dishes that I tried in Hoi An.

During this visit, I want to delve a little deeper into the town's food scene. Taking Neville's 'The Last Great Taste of Hoi An Food Tour' seemed



Platter of Vietnamese specialties including white rose



A lady grinds meat in a local market



Life seems to gat a slower pace in Hoi An



The famed Cao Lau

like the natural next step in increasing my knowledge on the subject, while giving myself the excuse to sample almost 50 dishes (some of them were bite-sized, I assure you!).

Neville Dean and his wife Colleen have been running their food tour since 2011. After several visits to the country, the 67-year-old Australian decided he wanted to discover and share the food and food culture of Vietnam. “I did not like the idea of retirement,” he says. “Hoi An is becoming known as the food lovers’ capital of the country, so it was the logical place to start up a food tour.”

And it was a wise decision. His tours are very popular; so popular that he barely gets a day off. And while this is partly down to the great humour that he brings to the table (no pun intended), it’s also owed to the rich variety of local dishes that are on offer here, and the interesting stories that

surround some of them.

Take cao lau as an example – it’s one of the few dishes that are exclusive to this town. Neville explains to us how the cau lau noodle-making secrets are held by Ta Ngoc Em and his family, who have been cooking this dish for five generations. “They mix aged rice flour together with 1000-year-old Bale well water sourced from the well under Hoi An’s old quarter. They then add ash from trees grown on the nearby Cham Islands,” he tells us.

With unique ingredients, secret recipes and, as Neville reminds us, a dash of ‘khéo tay’ being thrown into the mix, you can see why no one outside of Hoi An attempts to make cao lau. This, alongside banh bao banh vac, which are also known as White Rose dumplings because of their resemblance to white flowers, are on the top of any

visitors’ ‘must-try’ list when they arrive in town.

White Rose also has an interesting story surrounding it, which Neville explains to us while we sample some. The recipe is a secret that is held by a family that supplies all the restaurants in Hoi An with the dumplings. “Tran Tuan Ngai is the third generation secret-keeper of the traditional recipe, which uses both rice flour and tapioca flour in the making of the translucent paper,” explains Neville.

And personally I’m glad that the recipe is a secret. White Rose has the honour of being my all-time favourite dish. The small dumplings are filled with shrimp and then topped with toasted garlic and a deliciously-sweet dipping sauce consisting of fish sauce, hot chillies, lemon and sugar. They’re a palatable blend of sweet and sour – one that you only get to sample whenever you’re in Hoi An. Somehow I believe that part of the dish’s appeal is the fact you know that you will only get to taste it a few times in your life. The tour concludes with more samples of various dishes from around the country, as well as a discussion on the topic of a hot chilli sauce that’s exclusively available in Hoi An. Neville yet again utters the words ‘khéo tay,’ and I realise that unravelling this town’s culinary secrets is no easy feat.

One of the questions I want answering while >>

FIVE MUST TRY DINING EXPERIENCES IN HOI AN

- White Rose dumplings at Miss Ly Cafe (+84 510 3861 603).
- Vegetarian W at Minh Hien. Cao Lau is great pretty much everywhere in Hoi An, but you must try the veggie version just to marvel at how great the meat substitute is (+84 93 240 39 05).
- Set breakfast at Cargo Club (www.msvy-tastevietnam.com).
- Grilled fish in banana leaf at Thuan Y (+84 510 3 863 179).
- Fried shrimp in garlic and butter at Son Restaurant (www.sonhoian.com).

I'm here is secret recipes aside, what is it that makes Hoi An so rich in food offerings?

I'm hoping that a successful restaurant owner will know the answer. Tran Thanh Duc owns and runs three different dining venues in town – The Mango Mango, Mango Rooms and Mài Fish. Born in Vietnam, the 46-year-old arrived in the US as a teenager and subsequently spent three years with his foster family in Mexico, where he learnt to cook the Mexican way. After stints in Cuba, Latin America and New Zealand among other places, he ended up back in Vietnam 12 years ago.

He opened Mango Rooms (www.mangorooms.com) – a Latino influenced restaurant by the river – in 2004, where he combines his knowledge of Vietnamese and Latino cuisine. Duc, who mainly uses local products in his kitchens, explains how the produce that you find in Hoi An is one of the things that make the town special. “I love the duck,” he muses. “Hoi An has the best duck. The seafood here is also amazing and fresh. It may be limited in choice, but what is available is fantastic,” he says.

I ask him what the secret to great Vietnamese food is, and he replies with the words freshness and balance. “You have to balance sweet, salty, spicy and sour. Vietnamese dipping sauce is a perfect example of this – fat from anchovies, sea salt, fresh lime juice, garlic and sugar. You get all these flavours in one bite,” he says.

Speaking of balance, some of the most well-balanced dishes I've tried in Hoi An have all been at atmospheric little restaurants – such as Son Restaurant (www.sonhoian.com), a great little place just outside of the old town with an exotic garden setting, and Minh Hien Vegetarian Restaurant (+84 93 240 39 05), where the banana blossom salad with peanuts, and tofu grilled in a banana leaf is divine.

Greens galore

In fact, when compared to other cities in Vietnam vegetarians will find good food options in town. I was surprised to come across numerous impressive meat substitutes at some of the restaurants. The majority of the population here is Buddhist, and there are certain days when they're expected to abstain from meat. As the Vietnamese are meat-lovers, they've come up with ways to ensure they don't feel like they're missing out on those days. During one of my eating expeditions, I tried slithers of substitute chicken, and I was astonished at its resemblance to the real thing – from the way it looked through to the way it tasted. These substitutes, I'm told, are mainly made from seitan, tofu and texturised soya protein.

Undeterred by all the intangible descriptions of the cuisine, and determined to uncover at least some of its secrets, I decide to sign up for a cookery class at Green Bamboo Cooking School (www.greenbamboo-hoian.com), which was established by Hoi An-born Le Thi Thu Van – most commonly known as Van – in 2011 and has a great reputation in town.

You pre-choose one dish off an extensive menu, which Van teaches you to cook while the other students (there's never more than ten) watch. I shun the idea of trying to make cao lau and decide on learning how to cook stir-fried shrimp with lemongrass and chilli knowing that the ingredients involved are fairly easy to find wherever I am in the world.

While sweating our way through class, Van, who learnt how to cook from her mum and grandma, explains to me how fresh ingredients are integral to good Vietnamese food – echoing what Duc had also told me. “Vietnamese people don't

like freezing food. Older people are used to going to the market everyday and shopping for their lunch and dinner, and do the same thing the next day. There's no concept of a weekly shop here,” she explains.

After I successfully complete my shrimp dish, another student takes to the cooking station to make cao lau. The famous noodles that are used have been brought in, but everything else has to be prepared – the meat, the croutons, the greens, the broth.

When it's time to sample the dish, I'm curious to see how it works out and wonder if I'll end up regretting my decision not to choose to learn how to cook it myself. I take a bite, and all the ingredients are right – the crispy croutons, the chewy, thick noodles, the sweet broth. And yet, it's not on par with what I've tried when it's cooked by the locals. It's tasty, but not quite at the level that I've come to expect from the dish.

Must be missing the *khéo tay*, I think to myself. 🍴



Thu Bon River

TRAVEL DIARY

GETTING THERE: Etihad and Emirates fly daily to Ho Chi Minh City (tickets from Dhs6,000), from where you can catch a one-hour domestic flight to Da Nang with Vietnam Airlines. From Da Nang, Hoi An can be reached by cab in less than half an hour.

WHERE TO STAY: The Anantara Hoi An Resort is perfectly located just a stroll away from the historical old town of Hoi An. The hotel has a scenic view of the Thu Bon River, and offers guests the choice between 93 rooms and suites. There's also a great spa that you can check out after a long day of sightseeing (<http://hoi-an.anantara.com>).

USEFUL INFO: Visit www.tasteofhoian.com to find details of the Last Great Taste of Hoi An Food Tours.

Dusit Thani
DUBAI

A Splash of Tastes

Be drenched with an unforgettable splash of flavors with Benjarong's special feast in honour of the Songkran Water Festival - one of Thailand's most celebrated festivities which takes place every April.

Priced at AED 149, find yourself immersed in Thai-inspired surroundings and cultural ceremonies with the luscious selection from Khao Chare Set including Stir fried sweet turnips with egg, Chili stuffed with minced chicken and Thai sweet beef with vegetables, amongst others.

Available for lunch and dinner this whole month of April.

For reservations, call +971 4 317 4515 or
e-mail dine.dtdu@dusit.com

Benjarong
ROYAL THAI CUISINE



Modern Middle Eastern Masterclass

Our latest Food Club event last month saw chef Spencer Lee Black, culinary director at Vida Hotels & Resorts showcase some delicious contemporary Arabic-inspired dishes for our members at the gorgeous new Boulevard Kitchen restaurant in Manzil Downtown Dubai.



Beetroot and orange salad

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 1 hr **EASY**

3 medium-sized beetroots

75g rock salt

4 whole oranges

40ml olive oil

10ml orange juice

1/2 tsp cinnamon powder

40 mint leaves

A pinch of salt

A pinch of black pepper

1 Preheat oven to 200C.

2 Double layer some aluminum foil and cut a piece large enough to fit the beetroot. Sprinkle the salt on the aluminum foil and keep the beetroots on top. Pull the sides of the foil up around the beetroot, to make a bag. Seal and cook for 50 mins to 1 hr. Use a skewer or knife to check if done (it's done when the skewer moves easily when inserted into the beetroot). Set aside to cool, peel and cut into strips of about 1x1cm size.

3 Peel the oranges, and remove the pith. Slice two of the oranges into rounds, to get twenty orange rounds, and remove the seeds. Cut the other two oranges into segments, and discard the seeds.

4 In a bowl, mix together all ingredients, except the orange rounds. Place the five orange rounds on the plate, and the mixed salad on top.



Beef short rib tagine

SERVES 4 PREP 40 mins

COOK 3 hrs 30 mins **A LITTLE EFFORT**

600g beef short rib, boneless

2 tsp black pepper

1 tsp salt

1 tbsp honey

1 medium onion, diced

1 celery stalk, diced

1 cinnamon stick

2 bay leaves

1 tbsp corn oil

FOR THE SHORT RIB SAUCE

10ml corn oil

10ml olive oil

2 tsp ghee

500g white or yellow onions, finely sliced

2 tsp garlic purée

1 tsp ginger purée

½ tsp turmeric powder

½ tsp cinnamon powder

½ tsp ras al hanout spice mix

A pinch of saffron threads

8 dried apricots, cut into strips

20 prunes pitted

4 tbsp roasted skinless almonds

1 Cut the short ribs into 4x4 cm cubes, and season with salt and pepper.

2 Heat a non-stick pan, add oil

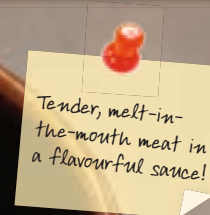
and brown meat on all sides, and transfer to a pot. Add the remaining ingredients and cover with water.

3 Slow cook for 1 hr, remove the meat and keep the broth aside.

4 To make the sauce, heat the ghee and oils in a pot, add the onions and slowly cook on low heat until translucent – do not brown it. When the onions are soft and become a paste, turn up the heat to medium and add the garlic, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, ras al hanout and saffron. Cook to release the aroma of spices. Add the beef short rib to the pot, and pour over the reserved cooking liquid. Cover and cook the beef for another 1 hr 30 mins on low heat, it should be cooking at a slow simmer. When the meat is soft, add the prunes and keep reducing the sauce to a medium thick consistency. If the sauce is too thick, add a little bit of water and cook the prunes for about 10 more mins.

5 Serve the beef short ribs in a large bowl, garnished with the sliced dried apricots and roasted almonds, with bread. >>

Tip You can also use lamb for this dish, lamb shanks or rump are ideal.





DESSERT

Honeycomb crème fraîche

SERVES 4 PREP 15 mins COOK 5 mins EASY

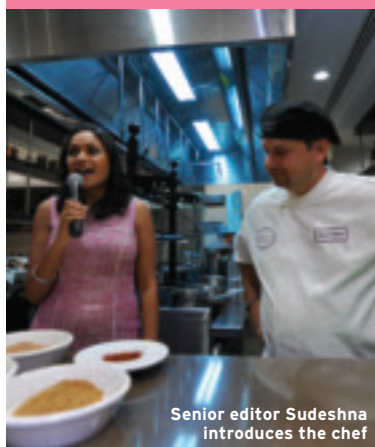
- 100g crème fraîche**
- 1 tbsp labneh**
- 1 tbsp yoghurt**
- 1 tsp powdered sugar**
- 4x4cm fresh honeycomb, cubed (available at select supermarkets)**
- 4 whole oranges, cut into segments**
- 40g ground almonds**
- 4 tsp pomegranate seeds**
- 28 sprigs of mint leaves (use only the smallest leaves from the top)**

1 Mix together the crème fraîche, labneh and yoghurt in a bowl. Add a teaspoon of the powdered sugar and mix together. Spoon this onto four plates, and slide with the back of a spoon to create a design. Place the honeycomb on top of the crème fraîche.

2 Peel the oranges, remove the pith, and cut into segments. Place them around the plate, and sprinkle pomegranate seeds all over. Place the honeycomb on top, add a line of ground almonds across it (see picture). Garnish with mint leaves and serve. E1

Want to be a part of our next Food Club event? Then sign up for a Premium membership (details on p120) to get priority confirmation. You can also like us on [facebook.com/bbcgoodfoodme](https://www.facebook.com/bbcgoodfoodme) and follow us on twitter.com/bbcgoodfoodme to get all our latest updates and join the foodie conversation!

SNAPSHOTS FROM THE EVENT



Senior editor Sudeshna introduces the chef



The venue's open kitchen lends itself to interaction with the chef



The audience couldn't get enough of his tips and techniques



One lucky guest got to get hands-on!



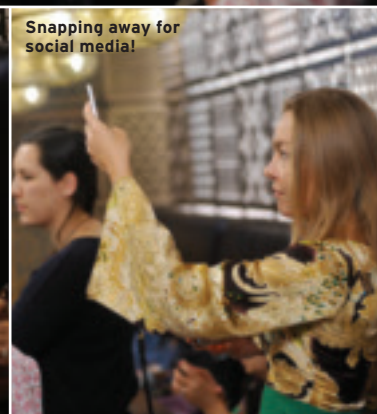
Chef Spencer peppered his masterclass with humour



Everyone got to try out the delicious creations



It was a social evening for foodies!



Snapping away for social media!

Cave Weekly

NIGHTS

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SUN



PERFECT PAIRING

Enjoy the perfect wine pairing with a selection of three signature dishes from 6 till 11:30pm.

TUE



Simply Wine & Cheese

Enjoy an evening of open curated cheese boards and wine carafes to match from 8 till 11pm.

WED



POT PIES & PINOT

Nothing goes better with a bottle of Pinot than pot pies from 6 till 11:30pm.

FRI



FONDUE FRIDAY

The quintessential sharing dish, get together over a melting pot paired with the perfect regional wines from 6 till 11:30pm.

SAT



Moules avec Muscadet

End the weekend with a pot of mussels paired with a bottle of Muscadet from 6 till 11:30pm.

Conrad Dubai • Mezzanine 2

For reservations call +971 4 444 7111
or email diningdubai@conradhotels.com



Challenge accepted!



Round 1

The first live cooking competition round of the Lurpak Cooking Challenge in association with *BBC Good Food ME* was an exciting night for the contestants and audience alike.

The Lurpak Cooking Challenge in association with *BBC Good Food ME* kicked off last month at McQueen's culinary school. Contestants of the Mystery Box cooking challenge were chosen after they sent through their recipes, along with a photo of the dish and the Lurpak Cook's Range product they used. At the first of the heats rounds on March 15, participants had to use all the Mystery box ingredients, along with two Lurpak Cook's Range products (choosing from clarified ghee, cooking mist, butter blocks, cooking liquid, and butter for baking) to cook a dish within 45 minutes. The contestants then had to describe their dish, before the judges deliberated and chose two winners to compete against Round 2 winners in the grand finale. The winner of the grand finale wins an all-expenses paid trip for two to Denmark.

MYSTERY BOX INGREDIENTS

- SIRLOIN STEAK
- MUSHROOMS
- THYME
- SNOW PEAS
- SWEET POTATO
- GOAT'S CHEESE



The audience cheered on the contestants



McQueen's professional kitchens provided the perfect set-up for cooking



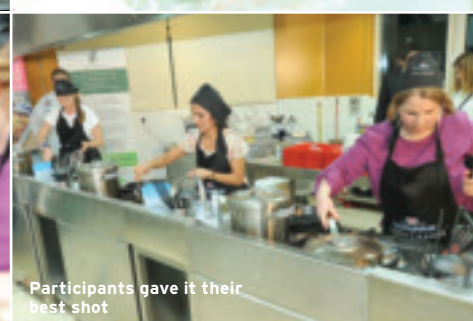
BBC Good Food ME Assistant Editor Nicola Monteath was the host for the evening



Hard at work against the clock!



Participants plan their dishes



Participants gave it their best shot



The Mystery Box contained an interesting mix of ingredients



The judges had their work cut out for them

MEET THE FINALISTS



Seda Solmaz is a marketing professional and foodie who loves participating in cooking competitions.



Radina Stefanova is a development manager, who loves recreating her mother's recipes in the kitchen.



Stanislava Suskavcevic, founder of a handmade accessories line, has been cooking ever since she was little.



Syeda Romana Khalid is a homemaker who loves baking and cooking. She also attends cooking classes to learn different cuisines.



Navita Gupta is a homemaker and avid cook, who has a baking-focused Facebook page, The Pink Penguins.



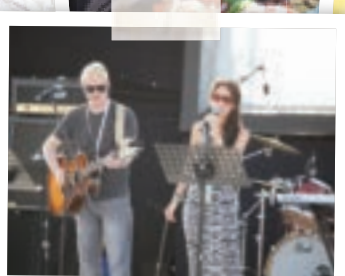
Cerasela Pavel is a food blogger and editor, and her love for food and cooking pushed her towards taking part in the competition.



EVENT HOSTED
AT MCQUEENS
CULINARY SCHOOL
(04-3626133);
MYSTERY BOX
COURTESY OF
LAFAYETTE
GOURMET
(04-3399933).

A GOOD TIME TO TASTE!

The annual Taste of Dubai event, which took place last month, was bigger and better than ever! Here are some highlights from the lively food festival.



VOX POPS

"I enjoyed the cookery school the most. It's great to get first-hand cooking tips from these top chefs. Also the entertainment and other activities was perfect for the whole family."

— Bernadette Thornely

"I ate at Gaucho and fell in love with the meat! It's so tender, and I convinced my friends to try it too. I'm making a reservation at the restaurant soon."

— Faizan Ali Khan

HASHTAG THAT!

We asked visitors to our stand to click a picture and tag us with **#bbcgtfod** on Instagram.



Year after year, this annual foodie event brings celebrity chefs, cooking demonstrations, restaurants to sample food at, and much much more to the Dubai Media City Amphitheatre for visitors to devour. This year's event – which took place from March 12 to 14 – saw renowned international chefs like Jean-Christophe Novelli, Andy Bates, Atul Kochhar, Jose Pizarro, and Dhruv Baker, to name a few, demonstrate some of their signature specials. Live entertainment from The Act Dubai dancers, the band, and DJ brought the packed venue to life, over the three days. While the

food at newly launched restaurants like Tresind, Perry and Blackwelder's Original Smokehouse, and The Scene, were absolutely worth queuing up for. The venue also had a play zone for little ones, market area for everything from jewellery to home décor, and bean bags, and benches to relax back and indulge at. We were there too, tempting visitors to our stand with cooking demonstrations from reigning *BBC Good Food ME* Chef of the Year 2014, Reif Bin Othman of Zuma, as well as a special subscription offer. If you missed all the action, here are some glimpses into the fun foodie weekend.

There was lots of action at the *BBC Good Food ME* stand, where Reif Bin Othman from Zuma did an exclusive series of demos of signature dishes like beef carpaccio and sashimi. We also gave away a Dhs150 Home Centre voucher for anyone who signed up for an annual subscription to the magazine at the event.



We're here!

Text: ADELE GERONIMO; NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs by CHARLIS THOMAS; MAKSYM PORIECHKIN

FIVE MINUTES WITH...

JOSÉ PIZARRO

TV chef, author, and owner of London restaurants - José and Pizarro.

What is your culinary philosophy?

I do simple, rustic Spanish classics with a twist.

One of your favourite dishes to cook at home?

I like to braise a shoulder of lamb, which I can put in the oven and just forget about until it's ready.

Your favourite cuisine?

I love Arabic food. When I smell grills anywhere, it makes me happy because the dishes are full of flavour.



FIVE MINUTES WITH...

BADER AL AWADHI

18 year-old Emirati chef, star of TV cookery shows including 'Sukkar Zyadah' on Sama Dubai TV, and 'Ma'a Bader' on Abu Dhabi TV Al Emarat.

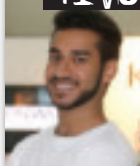
Who or what has been your single most important culinary influence?

I grew up watching great cookery shows which really inspired me. I really look up to chefs like Badi Vellastro and Duff Goldman.

Do you still remember the very first dessert you learnt how to make?

It was my mom's date cake. I remember making a great mess in the kitchen when I tried it too.

Your top baking tip? Many people religiously follow a certain recipe when baking, especially when it comes to measuring the ingredients. But for me, the best way is to just measure it as you go.



FIVE MINUTES WITH...

DHRUV BAKER

Winner of MasterChef 2010, co-owner of catering company Earlsfield Kitchen, and the Jolly Gardeners pub in London.

How's the event going for you so far? It's great, and I can actually see people enjoying the food that I made. In restaurants, you don't normally see the reactions of people eating what you have prepared, but here you get to interact with them.

What's your ultimate comfort food? During winter, I love having some hearty braised slow-cooked lamb. Whereas during summer, I enjoy eating a lot of seafood like squid and prawns.

Your favourite cookbook? *The Cooking Delights of the Maharajas* (Vakils, Feffer & Simmons Ltd.) written by my mum's uncle. Some of the recipes are over 100 years old, but I fall back to them every time.

Do you still remember the very first dish you learnt how to cook?

I made an omelette and a beef casserole, which probably wasn't that good!



FIVE MINUTES WITH...

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE NOVELLI

French celebrity chef, cookbook author, and founder of The Novelli Academy.

What do you enjoy most about this event?

The whole venue is so aromatic, but it's good smell – the aromas keep your brain busy, because you are always thinking what's that smell, I want to try that food? The mix of audience is amazing! I've been here many times, this is my fourth year.

Have you tried any of the food so far?

I tried the smoked brisket at Perry and Blackwelder, and I keep going back there to eat more of it.

What do you love cooking when you entertain at home?

Usually a fish papillote, couscous, or tagine.

A chef whose company you enjoy?

Jean-Georges. He is one of the humblest men I've ever met, and when I went to New York he served me the best meal.

What can your fans expect to see from you soon?

I'm getting back into the restaurant business, I will be opening a brasserie at the Double Tree by Hilton in Liverpool soon.



RECIPE

Celebrity chef Andy Bates showcased one of his specialties at the event:

Rump steak with bean mash and hazelnut salsa verde



SERVES 2 PREP 15 mins COOK 15 mins

2 rump steaks, around 250g each
FOR THE SALSA VERDE

75g hazelnuts, roasted

Handful of flat leaf parsley

Handful of mint leaves

Handful of basil leaves

4 anchovy fillets, drained

1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed

2 tsp Dijon mustard

Juice of 1/2 a lemon

4 tbsp olive oil

Sea salt and black pepper

FOR THE BEAN MASH

800g cannellini beans

50g unsalted butter

200ml double cream


Sea salt and white pepper

1 Preheat oven to 180C. Lay the nuts on a baking tray and roast for 8 to 10 mins, shaking occasionally. Set aside to cool.

2 Blitz the remaining salsa verde ingredients in a food processor until smooth, adding more oil to loosen if necessary. Roughly chop the nuts and add to the salsa, season to taste and set aside.

3 Drain the beans and heat in a saucepan with the butter and cream for 5 mins, until the beans are soft. Pour into a food processor and blend until smooth. Season to taste with salt and white pepper then return to the pan and keep warm until needed.

4 Heat a barbecue or griddle pan to high heat. Season the steaks with plenty of salt and pepper then cook for 2 to 3 mins on each side.

5 Transfer to a board to rest for 5 mins, slice thinly then pour the resting juices into the salsa verde. Serve the steak with the bean mash and salsa verde. 



a healthy, fun weekend for kids



The inaugural Etisalat Dubai Kids' Run and Fun Fair, which took place last month, proved to be a fun and engaging occasion for children of all ages, with lots of activities, food and learning on offer.



The first event of its kind in the UAE, the Etisalat Dubai Kids' Run saw over 2,000 children and their parents gather on the weekend of March 20 at the Dubai Media City Amphitheatre. Held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Al Jalila Bint Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the event, organised by CPI Media Group, focused on promoting healthy, balanced lifestyles for the upcoming generation. The race opened with an official Greek Olympic Torch lighting ceremony led by Panagiotis Dimakos, Chairman of the Greek Olympics Committee, Sergey Bubka, vice president of the International Association of Athletics Federations, Ahmed Al Amari, president of the UAE Athletics Federation, Ghanim Ali Al Marri, Dubai deputy general manager of Etisalat, Antonio El Sayegh, corporate communications manager of BASF Middle East, and Dominic Desousa, founder and Chairman of CPI Media Group.

Children then ran a 2-kilometre circuit around the Dubai Media City area in two categories, for ages four-eight, and nine-12. The event also included a lively Fun Fair (more pictures from the Fun Fair on p103) which ran over two days, and was free to attend for everyone. Fully equipped with child-friendly areas, the Fun Fair featured exciting activities, educational experiences, thrilling rides, food stalls and a lot of prizes and giveaways for children of all ages. Whether it was food trucks offering yoghurt and ice creams, or nutrition experts offering first-hand advice to parents to getting their children to eat healthy and be more active, it was all there! >>





Spotlight on children's nutrition

Recent studies by the Dubai Health Authority state that one in every three children in the UAE are obese and are at risk of getting diabetes. The Dubai Etisalat Kids Run and Fun Fair aimed at educating the region's upcoming generation on the importance of healthy eating, proper exercise and the proactive pursuit of wellness. We asked visitors as well as experts at the event for their views on getting kids to eat better.

What parents say

● For my child's school lunch, I always see to it that I give him a variety of fruits and vegetables. I give him some capsicum which are rich in Vitamin C, cucumbers and grapes. Of course, I also give him some milk and fresh fruit juices. That's how I make sure that he eats healthy at school. ● – *Inga Maltman*

● In keeping my three children active physically, we always encourage them to join in the sports activities that they like. My sons like football so we are very much supportive of them in being in those kinds of activities, that's what they enjoy and that's important. ● – *Salma Marei*

● At home we try to always prepare healthy meals, especially for the kids. As much as possible, we avoid giving the kids processed foods like hotdogs and burgers. A typical lunch meal at home includes vegetable soup prepared by my wife and some pasta. ● – *Mohammad Ibrahim*

What the expert says



Maria Baghdoyan, Gallery Nutritionist, Nestle, who was on-site at the Kids Run Fun Fair offering tips and advice weighs in:

● I think events like these are very important for promoting awareness, because I believe that if you pair good nutrition with fun, that's when it becomes more effective. It's great to see parents are so willing to learn about how they can get their children to eat healthier foods, and the ideal time to start is when you introduce them to solid foods. Also, it is vital that parents make healthier choices in food too because they should be the role models for their children. Being active is essential too, and to get their children more active, I encourage the parents to take time to understand what their child's interests are – activities are not supposed to be an exhausting experience, it should be interesting and fun. They can go running, swimming or join a football team, it depends on the child's interest. In terms of food, if a child doesn't like a certain kind of food, try asking them why, and then try to find a way of how you can get them to eat those foods along with those that they like. For example, you can add some broccoli into something like meat loaf. If they don't like milk, try making some milk-based desserts that are low in sugar, that way they can get the calcium that they need.

So parents need to be creative and find that middle ground where their children are enjoying what they eat, while getting the nutrition that they need. ● >>

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fun and food

While enjoying the fun games and on-stage entertainment, children and adults alike got to tuck into some healthy and scrumptious foods from various restaurants like Lemonade, Flippin' Pizza, Labaneesh and Joga, to name just a few. They also got to enjoy treats and nibbles from the funky food trucks by Melt frozen Yogurt and Al Rawadi chicken, among others.



try this

**A healthy smoothie recipe
from Joga that kids will love:**

Energiser

Serves 1


80g sliced bananas

150g frozen strawberry

100g frozen raspberry

30g lemon sorbet

410ml apple juice

Place sliced bananas, frozen strawberries, frozen raspberries, lemon sorbet and apple juice in a blender. Blend for 30 seconds or until smooth. Serve in clear glasses. 



Competition



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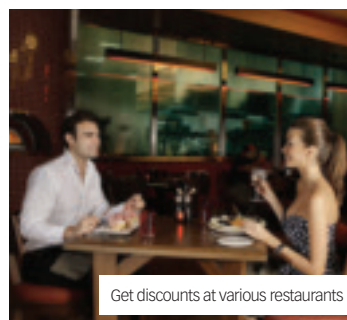
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For all of your support in making the region's first ever Etisalat Dubai Kids' Run and Fun Fair weekend on March 20 and 21, a massive hit - It wouldn't have been possible without you all! Because of you, the event was successfully launched and will be back again in 2016, for round two! We're so excited to get the fun started again with everyone next year. In the meantime be sure to stay healthy, active and happy!

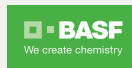
Thank you, everyone!

For all the latest updates and photographs from the event, please visit: www.etisalatkidsrun.com or follow us on Facebook at: Etisalat Dubai Kids Run.

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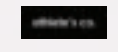
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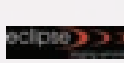
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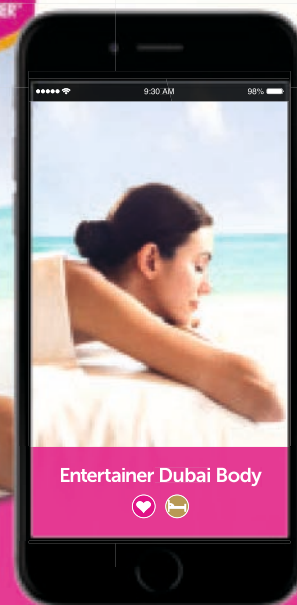


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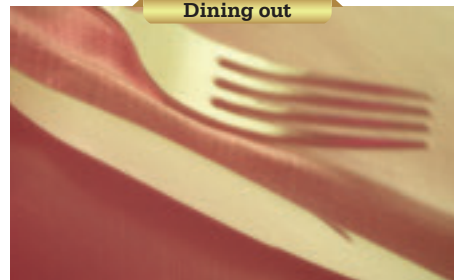


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WIN! BRUNCH FOR FOUR AT LA PORTES DES INDES, WORTH OVER DHS1,550.

One lucky winner and three guests can try out this Indian brunch with a twist. The restaurant, located on the ground floor of The Address Dubai Mall, boasts a contemporary setting with high ceilings, and offers a selection of dishes like cassoulet fruits de mer, and Madras coffee crème brûlée, to name a few.



WIN! A MEAL FOR FOUR AT IRIS YAS ISLAND, WORTH DHS1,500.

One winner can take three people along to this upbeat lounge and restaurant at Yas Island, to enjoy the Family Saturday menu. It features a menu for little ones, and breakfast items like eggs royal with truffles, and there's a playground for children nearby too. It's the perfect way to end the weekend!

WIN! BRUNCH FOR TWO AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA, WORTH OVER DHS550.

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Take three friends along to this casual dining restaurant, and enjoy a widespread buffet brimming with salads, soup, and mezze. For mains, you can choose from the chef's selection, but make sure to keep space for dessert too. Once done, head to the deck to relax and take in the stunning views of the Dubai skyline.

To stand a chance to win these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.


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Kitchens of the future

Jeevan Thankappan, Group Editor of CPI Media Group's technology division, muses on how the way we cook and eat is going high-tech.

CNME is the leading technology magazine of the region, which provides business and technology leaders with insights into IT trends in the Middle East.



First off, I have a little confession to make. I am not someone excited by the kitchen, but I do dabble in cooking from time to time with a very limited repertoire. An occasional stir-fry or beef stroganoff basically sums up my culinary skills.

In my 15 odd years as a technology journalist, I have been privy to the astonishing changes technology has made in our daily lives, and this includes our kitchens as well. Around ten years back, when the Internet Home Alliance, which is backed by some of the biggest names in technology such as Cisco, Intel and Microsoft, unveiled its vision for the ideal digital kitchen, the idea was pooh-pooed by many as science fiction. But today, refrigerators with a flat panel touchscreen for Internet access and microwave ovens equipped with barcode scanners that can help you automatically programme the exact cooking time, are already a reality. In this age of 'smart everything', kitchen appliances connected to the Internet to improve performance are becoming increasingly common.

The kitchen, it is often said, is the nerve-centre of any home, especially homes with children. So it is probably no surprise that some of the technology companies want to make the Internet as pervasive as other home utilities in your kitchen. If you ask someone like me with a pathological romance with technological advances, what is the point in having a kitchen if you can't stock it with the latest and greatest culinary gadgets?

And if I were to come up with a wish list for my kitchen, I would start with one of the wackiest ideas – a lightsaber knife! Not that I fancy myself as a Jedi knight from Star Wars, but this knife with different blades made of shape-changing material promises to cut through meat, vegetable and just about everything else. It's still a concept though, which is being productised by Electrolux. This is exactly the sort of thing I need because I am hopeless at determining whether to use a bread knife, a cleaver or just a utility blade while chopping.


Next on my list is the iPad-connected kitchen scale from Drop that will help you hone your baking skills. This scale, which connects to your iPad via Bluetooth, can identify the weight of foods you place onto it, and comes with an app that boasts a database of different recipes and helps you create the dish with the right amounts of ingredients.

Talking about apps, this is just one of the thousands of food-centric apps available on both iOS and Android for recreational cooks. In fact, there are more than 45,000 recipes from television's most famous chefs available in a single app for the iPhone and iPad. Like most other things, however, not all apps are created equal. Here are some of my personal favourites:

BigOven – a recipe and shopping list app with more than 350,000 recipes to search through and menus curated by season, holiday, course, lifestyle, diet and more.

Epicurious – another free recipe and grocery list app packed with more than 30,000 high-quality recipes, which can be shared with friends via email or Facebook. This app comes with a voice control feature so that you don't have to scroll through your iPad with sticky fingers.

Yummly – a hugely popular app that provides recipe recommendations personalised to your tastes and eliminates things you don't like. It's like a cookbook perfectly customised to your palate and when you launch Yummly, you will see recipes that are popular with other users right on the home page.

Now, you'd assume that all this talk of kitchen apps and gadgets would make anyone want to rush to the kitchen and prepare something splendid for dinner. But not me – I still can't think of any task more daunting. I will be flipping through my app-filled smartphone looking at food photos instead! 





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